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Contents

ARTICLES

The Demons of Kosovo
Warren Zimmermann 3

In Asia's Mirror
Sebastian Mallaby 13

Responses to Mallaby
Chalmers Johnson, Martin Feldstein, Francis Fukuyama 22

Can Asians Think?
Kishore Mahbubani 27

Religion and American Foreign Policy
Leo Ribuffo 36

1848: Seed Plot of History 52

Mao in History
Ross Terrill 54

Bad Judgment at Bordeaux
John Laughland 65

Australia and the Asian Crisis
Eric Jones 71

Elegy for a Contrarian
Scott McConnell 81

BOOKS

Loose Cannon
Bruce Blair 87

Rude Awakening
Martin Kramer 93

Getting It Off Pat
Walter A. McDougall 96

Too Impressive to be Real
Mark Falcoff 100

Bearish on Teddy
Charles R. Kesler 105

CORRESPONDENCE

Gideon Rose, Lord Beloff, John Laughland, Miomir Zuzul, Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Warren Marik, Eliyahu Kanovsky, Michael C. Lynch, Ed Crane, Tom G. Palmer, Desmond Wilson, Thomas H. Henriksen 111

QUARTERLY

Iraq: Anatomy of a Farce
Adam Garfinkle 123

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The Demons of Kosovo

Warren Zimmermann

A gray falcon spread its wings and flew away from Jerusalem to the field of Kosovo. It carried a book from the Mother of God to Tsar Lazar, who was preparing his army to defend Serbia against attack by the Turks. The falcon dropped the book on the Tsar's knees, and it began to speak by itself:

'Honorable Tsar Lazar, what Kingdom will you embrace now? Is it to be the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of this world? If you choose the earthly one, saddle your horses, tighten their reins, gird on your swords. Let all your knights rush together among the Turks. All the Turkish invaders will perish by your hands. But if you choose the Kingdom of Heaven, then build a church on the field of Kosovo, not with marble but with pure silk and brocades, and let your knights take holy communion in it. For they shall all die, and you, Prince, will die with them.'

When the Tsar read these words, he beseeched God for advice: 'O Almighty Lord, what kingdom shall I choose? Shall I choose a heavenly kingdom, or shall I choose an earthly kingdom? If I choose an earthly kingdom, it will last only for a short time, but a heavenly kingdom will last through all eternity.' So the Tsar chose a heavenly kingdom. He built the church in Kosovo of silk and brocades, and summoned the Serbian Patriarch and his twelve bishops to come. Then he gave his soldiers the Eucharist and their battle orders. In the same hour the Turks attacked Kosovo.

Tsar Lazar rushed among the Turks with his seventy-seven thousand men, and chased them across the vast field of Kosovo. They were so fiery and brave that it seemed as if they would carry the day. And so they would have, but for Vuk Branković, the Tsar's son-in-law, who betrayed him and joined the Turkish side. So the Tsar perished, and with him all his soldiers, the seventy-seven thousand Serbs. All was holy, all was honorable, and the goodness of God was fulfilled.

THUS THE SERBIAN national epic of Kosovo, handed down by oral tradition for six centuries and known to every Serb from childhood. It embodies almost all the elements that Serbs see in their history and in their present circumstances—heroism, mission, holiness, faith, glory, devotion, opulence, disunity, betrayal, demonization, martyrdom, victimization, predestination. Kosovo is the founding myth for all Serbs, the historic heart of Serbia's glorious medieval kingdom, the religious seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the geographic site of Serbia's oldest and most beautiful monasteries and churches. When Serbs think and talk of Kosovo, in their mind's eye they are seeing their past—their transgressions as well as their triumphs—through the purifying light of their own origins as a nation.

The real battle of Kosovo took place on June 28, 1389. Most historians agree that it was not the epic struggle of the myth. Nor was it even the decisive battle against the

Warren Zimmermann, professor of diplomacy at Columbia University, was U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1989-92.

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Turks, which had been fought and lost eighteen years before in Bulgaria. The opposing forces were small and feudal. Tsar Lazar evidently had problems raising a national army; his curse against malingerers—"Let [their] fields go barren of the good golden wheat / Let [their] vineyards remain without vines or grapes"—has been carved into the marble monument that stands today on the field of Kosovo. Muslim Albanians, Christian Bosnians, and Catholic Croats probably fought on the Serbian side, and (as the epic implies) some Serbs fought with the Turks. The post-Kosovo Serbian contention that the Serb knights were defending Europe against the infidel is thus questionable. In any case they failed, since after Kosovo the Turks swept through the Balkan peninsula and eventually through Hungary to threaten the ramparts of Vienna.

Kosovo remained under Turkish suzerainty until Serbia got it back, with the diplomatic support of France and Russia, following the First Balkan War in 1912. After World War I, it became a part of newly created Yugoslavia, remaining effectively under Serbian rule. During World War II Kosovo was occupied by Mussolini's Italy. While some Albanians fought the Axis as members of Josip Broz Tito's partisans, many others collaborated with the Italians with the aim of forming a greater Albania.

After the victory of Tito's communist army in 1945, Kosovo became an autonomous region under Serbian control. Tito's last constitution in 1974 and his death in 1980 brought considerable political and cultural autonomy to Kosovo and its Albanian majority. For example, the province was awarded one of the eight seats on the collective Yugoslav presidency, the same allocation as for Serbia and the other republics of Yugoslavia. These concessions spurred Kosovo's Albanians to lobby for even greater autonomy. During riots in 1981 in the capital, Pristina, Albanian student demonstrators demanded republic status for Kosovo, a condition that would make it completely independent of Serbia and imply its right to secede from Yugoslavia.

During most of Kosovo's history, its Serbian and Albanian populations lived in hostile coexistence. They fought each other in both world wars, the Serbs on the Allied side, most of the Albanians on the German. Neither ethnic group showed much tolerance whenever it got the upper hand. The increase in Albanian power in the 1980s, the subliminal and sometimes explicit demand for republic status, and the widening demographic difference (Albanians make up about 90 percent of the two million population today) stoked growing revanchism among nationalist Serbs.

Serbian grievances were not all trivial, though they were cynically exploited and distorted by Serb nationalists. Kosovo, they argued, is the Serbian Jerusalem—a Holy Land in which Serbia's nation, religion, state, and culture were born. They even made an explicit link between Serbia and Israel and between the Albanians and the Palestinians. Kosovo, Serb nationalists claimed in the 1980s, was ruled by Muslim "separatists" who had fought against the West twice in this century, who remained loyal to a foreign power—Albania—and who wanted to take Kosovo and its Serbian identity right out of Yugoslavia.

Nationalists alleged further that Albanians were stripping Serbs of their rights, raping their women, and torturing their men. (These ridiculous charges distort the fact, conceded to me by Kosovo Albanian leaders, that some Albanians did abuse their powers before 1989.) But by nationalist scripture, Tito was the primary betrayer of Serbia, even though it was his military successes that ensured that Kosovo would go to Serbia, rather than Albania, in 1945. Among his sins, the nationalists charged, was his denial of the constitutional voice of Yugoslavia's largest nation by making it possible for Kosovo and Vojvodina, the other autonomous province, to outvote Serbia two-to-one in the collective presidency of Yugoslavia.

The Albanians have their own grievances, some of which pre-date the horren-

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dous deprivation of basic rights that they now suffer. Kosovo is not their Jerusalem, but they can argue a prior claim to it. A people who go back to classical times (they fought against Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander the Great), Albanians occupied the Balkan peninsula long before the Slavs arrived in the seventh century. Like the Serbs, they were a subject people under the Turks. Led by their national hero, Skanderbeg, they fought bravely against the Ottoman invaders before succumbing in 1479. They won their independence from Turkey in 1912 under the banner of another Albanian patriot, Ismail Kemal. Throughout the twentieth century the Albanians have been a majority in Kosovo, first a small one, now a large one. Their initial claim to autonomy and their current insistence on independence are based on the democratic, majoritarian principle, as well as on their residence in Kosovo for more than a millennium.

The competing claims of Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo have been hopelessly tangled in the webs of history and myth. In its essence, however, the main issue is as simple as it is intractable. The Serbian claim to hegemony is based primarily on the historical/cultural principle—the Jerusalem argument. The Albanian claim to independence is based largely on the demographic principle—the majority argument. Since these claims are

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mutually incompatible, there is little reason to think that Kosovo will be easy to solve, especially after the events of the past nine years.

Milošević as Avenger

SERBIAN COMPLAINTS, magnified by nationalists and laden with the emotional appeals such as only Kosovo could evoke, virtually guaranteed that a Serbian demagogue would arise to exploit them. Slobodan Milošević, who had spent his entire career as a Serbian communist espousing the Titoist position on Kosovo, seized his chance, reversed himself overnight, ousted and replaced the Serbian party leader (his mentor and best friend), and trained the blunderbuss of Serbian politics and press on the Albanians, their powers, and their rights.

In March 1989 Milošević got the Serbian parliament to abolish Kosovo's political autonomy. He then removed its mainly Albanian leadership and replaced it with Serbs or "honest" (read quisling) Albanians. Schools became breeding grounds of Serbian propaganda. The library of Pristina University, with the finest Albanian language collection in Europe, was closed. From a vibrant, if impoverished, population of Yugoslavia, the Kosovo Albanians became a colonial appendage of nationalist Serbia. Since Milošević's move against them in 1989, their situation has progressively worsened. Kosovo today represents the worst human rights problem in Europe.

Milošević's crackdown on the Albanians produced a surprising reaction from the victims. Ibrahim Rugova, the deceptively dreamy poet who has been the Kosovo Albanians' political leader throughout the 1990s, decided on a tactic of peaceful resistance. The decision was consistent with Rugova's character—he is a follower of Gandhi—but it was also politically astute. After Milošević's assault, the Albanians received nothing beyond rhetorical support from the republics of the dissolving Yugoslav state. The Slovenes, their principal advocates, used the Kosovo issue to blacken Milošević, but they had neither the means nor the will to provide material assistance. Moreover, the Yugoslav army and the Serbian police enjoyed a virtual monopoly of power in Kosovo; armed resistance would have been ruthlessly suppressed. The United States—Rugova's strongest supporter in the West—took the position that, though Milošević's actions were beyond the pale of civilization, Kosovo should nevertheless remain a part of Yugoslavia.

Flexible on tactics, Rugova clung with tenacity to principle. Following Milošević's arrogant refusal even to discuss Kosovo's autonomy, Rugova declared its independence. He has created a shadow state (the Republic of "Kosova" in the Albanian-language spelling) of which he was re-elected president in March in an uncontested vote. While no foreign state, not even Albania, has recognized "Kosova", its spectral existence gives Albanians something to hope and strive for.

During the past nine years the word that best describes Kosovo is division. The Albanians have been purged from all governmental institutions, and have made no effort to re-join them. They adamantly refuse to take part in Serbian elections or to recognize any other form of Serbian authority over Kosovo. As a result, the province is represented in the Serbian assembly in Belgrade by deputies elected by mere handfuls of people whose primary interest is in subduing the Albanian majority. Even Arkan, the notorious racist murderer of Croats and Bosnian Muslims, won a seat. Albanians have been expelled, or have withdrawn, from all other organizations that might bring them into contact with Serbs—administrative offices, schools, the university, hospitals, and medical clinics—and have set up their own parallel structures, even including a mechanism for collecting taxes. Albanian willingness to compromise on selected non-political issues—like returning their children to schools—has foundered on Serbian intransigence.

Milošević's refusal to cede even an inch has now produced its inevitable conse-

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quence—Rugova's non-violent approach is being challenged within his own community. An insurgent group calling itself the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began earlier this year to bomb police stations, and to kill Serbian policemen, senior officials, and Albanian collaborators. Though the attacks were targeted rather than indiscriminate (making the KLA less classically terrorist than Hamas or even the IRA), and though they have not so far been launched in Serbia proper, they represent a clear deepening of the Kosovo crisis. Rugova and other moderates have hesitated, either out of fear or calculation, to condemn the KLA. Their ominous silence adds legitimacy and strength to the insurgents.

Milošević has reacted by sending special police units to destroy the villages considered rebel strongholds; among the dead, apparently, have been a KLA leader and many noncombatants, mostly women and children. These extreme Serbian tactics have significantly swelled the numbers of guerrilla fighters. The KLA is being reinforced by Albanians returning from jobs in Western Europe and locally by young Albanian men who have known nothing but Serbian oppression and feel that they have nothing to lose. Weapons are pouring across the mountainous border between Kosovo and Albania. The escalation of the crisis conveys two warnings—that the moderate Albanian leadership may be giving way to violent groups emboldened by the creation of martyrs, and that Milošević is prepared to use lethal force to keep the Albanians down.

Worse Than Bosnia?

IT IS MISLEADING to equate the Kosovo and the Bosnian conflicts. There are, of course, similarities in their inherently violent character, in Milošević's culpability for initiating conflict in both places, and in the involvement of the United States and the international community. Bosnia and Kosovo also share an important temporal connection. As long as the Bosnian war was raging, both Milošević and Rugova saw an interest in keeping things relatively quiet in Kosovo. Milošević wanted to avoid war on a second front. Rugova knew that the Serbs had most of the firepower, and feared that a confrontation in Kosovo might fail to engage Western concern against the broader canvas of Bosnia. The Bosnian war, while it lasted, was thus a vaccination against conflict in Kosovo. With its end, the vaccination has worn off.

These similarities, however, pale before the significant and troubling differences between Bosnia and Kosovo. Enmities in Kosovo run even deeper than in Bosnia. Bosnia suffered a civil war with major outside aggression by Serbia; Kosovo is an example of almost classic colonial oppression. While the Serbs in Bosnia constituted about a third of the republic's population before the war, in Kosovo Milošević has launched his aggression against 90 percent, and on behalf of only 10 percent, of the local population. In Bosnia, particularly in the later stages of the war, the Serbs faced tough Muslim and Croatian adversaries. In Kosovo Milošević has strengthened his already massive force advantage with the creation of military-configured special police units. All Bosnians are Slavs, with a common language. Serbs and Albanians are separate ethnic groups and speak unrelated languages (Serbian is closer to Polish than it is to Albanian). And unlike Bosnia, there is no recent tradition of multi-ethnic tolerance in Kosovo; Serbs and Albanians have been at each other's throats for this entire century.

Inconceivable though it may seem, Kosovo is also a more complex problem than Bosnia. The Serbs do have a serious claim to sovereignty, though they have tarnished it shamefully by their actions; they had no such claim in Bosnia. For the reasons described earlier, Kosovo has a strong hold on the mentality of most Serbs, not just that of extreme nationalists. The historical, religious, and cultural resonance of Kosovo has no parallel in Bosnia for the Serbian psyche. Serbs have left Kosovo in droves since World War II for economic reasons; most Serbs who don't live

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there have never visited. No matter—the pull of the past remains strong.

In Bosnia the Serbian war effort ended in disunity; Milošević enraged the Bosnian Serb leaders by compromising at Dayton. No such rift is yet apparent over Kosovo; in fact, in April Milošević won a 97 percent referendum vote in Serbia against foreign mediation over Kosovo. Most Serbs manifest no opposition to, or guilt for, Milošević's crimes in Kosovo. Indeed, they seem to think in ludicrous racial stereotypes. A poll conducted in January 1998 for the Open Society Institute, financier George Soros' outstanding human rights organization, to measure what Serbs think of themselves and others produced discouraging results. Serbs, the poll found, see themselves as industrious, intelligent, caring, sincere, honest, clean, unselfish, peace-loving, friendly to other peoples, proud, and hospitable. They see Albanians, on the other hand, as evil, lazy, stupid, insincere, uncultured, dirty, selfish, warlike, and Serb-hating. The Albanians were given more negatives than any other group, including the Serbs' recent enemies, the Croats and Bosnian Muslims.

The Bosnian war, bloody as it was, was contained within Bosnia's frontiers. There is little hope of that in Kosovo, if it sinks into major conflict. Kosovo borders on the independent countries of Albania and Macedonia. The outbreak of war could hardly leave the Albanian government indifferent, although its military weakness might limit its involvement to stepping up arms transfers to the Kosovo Albanians. Democratic but fragile Macedonia has a large Albanian minority, perhaps as much as 30 percent of the population. War in Kosovo, together with the flight of refugees into Macedonia, could radicalize that minority and shake the stability of the government in Skopje. Greece, which has a paranoid fear of a Macedonian "threat" to its northern territory, and Bulgaria, which considers Macedonians really to be Bulgarians, could be energized; and so could Turkey, the largest Muslim country in the Balkans and home to a significant Albanian minority. This is admittedly a worst-case domino scenario, but the occurrence of even parts of it would be destabilizing for the entire region. Kosovo's spill-over potential should make it at least as legitimate an object of American concern as Bosnia has been.

It might be possible to mitigate this spill-over effect by placing NATO or UN troops in Macedonia and Albania, along Kosovo's international borders. The small UN force in Macedonia, which currently monitors Macedonia's borders with Serbia and Albania, could be augmented and partially redeployed; Albania has declared its readiness to accept an international force on its side of the Kosovo line. Such troops, particularly if they were from NATO, might have some deterrent effect on the outbreak of major fighting in Kosovo. But they couldn't impair Serbia's ability to reinforce its military and police presence across its non-international border with Kosovo.

Nor, for both legal and moral reasons, could an international force stop refugees from fleeing into Macedonia or Albania from Kosovo if hostilities broke out. In fact, an international force on Kosovo's borders might inhibit the Kosovo Albanians more than the Serbs, and could thus be exploited by Milošević to his own advantage. It is thus hard to escape the conclusion that a successful containment strategy will not be possible without dealing with the military problem in Kosovo itself.

This will not be easy. Kosovo is slightly smaller than Connecticut and only a fifth the size of Bosnia. But it is a land of mountains, valleys, and gorges, where the medieval Serbs built many of their churches to shelter them from the Turks. With the Serbs now the occupiers, the rugged terrain favors the Albanian guerillas. The character of Serbia's occupation would make Bosnia-style air strikes against Serbian targets difficult for NATO. The Bosnian war was partly a war of fronts. In Kosovo power operates on a smaller scale. The Serbs have a police, and a growing army, presence throughout most of the province. Surgical air strikes without casual-

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ties, such as NATO accomplished in Bosnia in 1995, would be virtually impossible. Air attacks would almost certainly victimize both Serbian and Albanian civilians. Moreover, stealing a leaf from Saddam Hussein, the Serbs have begun to establish military outposts in populated areas.

NATO air power could reduce Milošević's ability to launch a major military campaign against the Albanians by inhibiting the Serbian ability to move ground forces and helicopters. But air strikes would probably have to be repeated several times to have a significant effect. The Bosnian air war was over in two weeks; such a quick success would seem unlikely in Kosovo.

There are legal and psychological problems as well. The West intervened militarily in Bosnia at the invitation, indeed the pleading, of the Bosnian government. Serbia, the recognized authority in Kosovo, has adamantly rejected any Western involvement. Milošević rejected an American attempt to have a Western presence at his first meeting with Rugova on May 15. Moreover, the emotional hold of Kosovo on Serbs might just cause them to react to Western military intervention by closing ranks behind Milošević. Economic sanctions are also unpromising; they were used so heavily against the Serbs over Bosnia that they probably have little punch left. In response to a major assault by Milošević, air strikes and economic sanctions would need to be seriously considered for credibility's sake. But their effect might turn out to be more symbolic than instrumental.

The American Factor

IS THERE ANY chance that the flammable tinder of Kosovo can be damped down locally, by negotiation between Milošević and the Rugova leadership without foreign assistance? Probably not. Milošević, after a decade of pretending that Rugova did not exist, has finally met him. But the chasm between them remains wide. Plenty of arguments can be cited to Milošević in favor of a change of direction. For example, he will do better dealing with the Albanian moderates than with the extremists who will follow them. If he doesn't act now before the armed Albanian resistance becomes powerful, he may lose Kosovo altogether. His nationalist failures may soon lose him support in Serbia; even some of his extremist supporters are turning critical. He has demonstrated his opportunism before by undermining extreme nationalists in Croatia and Bosnia, so why not now in Kosovo?

The answer to these logical points resides in Milošević's character. He has made concessions in the past only when forced into them. By nature he is a leader of supreme intransigence, prepared to lie, falsely promise, and renege in the interest of avoiding even the most trivial compromise. He came to his nationalism by opportunism, not conviction; thus, he could back down in Croatia and Bosnia. But Kosovo is different. Milošević has defined his political identity by his nationalism on Kosovo. He came to power on the issue, and—now that he has inflamed the emotions of the Serbian people over it—he seems to believe that his political survival depends on his inflexibility. His recent inclusion in the Serbian government of Vojislav Šešelj, a pathological racist who has in the past called for elimination of the Kosovo Albanians, is a disturbing indication of Milošević's obstinacy. If a solution to the Kosovo problem is to be found, it will almost certainly have to be through Western—mainly American—political and military pressure.

American involvement with Kosovo goes back to the beginning of Milošević's rule. When I arrived in Yugoslavia as U.S. ambassador in 1989, three weeks before the Serbian assembly eliminated Kosovo's autonomy, my instructions included a strong expression of concern about the violation of Albanian rights. The U.S. Congress, prodded by then-Senator Bob Dole, had already strongly criticized Milošević. Kosovo remained a major point of contention between Milošević and

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the United States throughout the Bush administration. On December 25, 1992, Bush, then a lame duck, warned the Serbian leader that the United States would respond with force if Milošević cracked down in Kosovo; the new Clinton administration repeated the warning.

The United States has never challenged the legitimacy of Serbian authority in Kosovo, but neither has it consistently accepted Serbian sovereignty. The current American position is that Kosovo is a part of Milošević's new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (created following the secession of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, and Macedonia), but not a part of the Serbian republic within "Yugoslavia." American acceptance of Serbian authority in Kosovo derives from the view that Kosovo has been historically Serbian, that all of Tito's constitutions recognized Serbian primacy there, and that denial of that primacy could start the Balkan dominoes falling. The need to maintain a multiethnic Bosnia adds additional weight to the argument for opposing the ethnic separation of Kosovo. The U.S. refusal to recognize Serbian sovereignty in Kosovo, on the other hand, is meant to acknowledge that the Albanian majority there has valid rights that are being denied.

The balance in American policy between Serbian control and Albanian rights will look less viable if Milošević continues his repressive tactics. For the time being, though, it has the advantages of opening paths to a compromise on Kosovo's status and of qualifying the United States as an objective potential mediator.

The choices facing the Clinton administration are narrow and difficult. It would be unthinkable, given America's political and moral investment in Kosovo, to stand by and let Milošević put the Albanians down. Moreover, it would make no geopolitical sense, since a Serbian bloodbath would probably call forth a genuine Kosovo national liberation army, supplied along the sixty-mile border with Albania and helped by Albanians in Macedonia and Montenegro, and by Muslims in Bosnia and Serbia. Without American firmness, however, a permissive passivity is probably what the pusillanimous Europeans (not only Serbia's overt backers Russia and Greece, but France and Italy as well) would be inclined to display.

On the other hand, American support for Albanian independence would carry major risks. The Serbs would surely fight to avoid the loss of Kosovo. To prevent Bosnia-magnitude casualties, NATO would therefore have to contemplate massive military intervention, with its attendant dangers. Even if independence were achieved without great bloodshed, its potential to destabilize the Balkans would be enormous. A decision by the Kosovo Albanians to join Albania could stimulate fears of a greater Albania threatening its neighbors. More immediately, the Albanians of Macedonia, feeling isolated, could well press to join their brethren, thus raising the specter of Macedonia's collapse. U.S. officials are particularly worried that Western acceptance of an independent "Kosova" would destroy the Dayton agreement on Bosnia, which is based on integration, not separation.

Still, U.S. acceptance of Serbian authority over Kosovo need not be absolute or irrevocable. If Milošević provokes a conflict with the Albanians, or even if he continues to disdain opportunities to negotiate seriously with them, the U.S. government should ask itself whether he has lost his legal authority over them and should consider reversing its position on sovereignty. The time may come when we will have to take sides. Even threatening such a reversal would help Milošević see how strongly the United States opposes him over Kosovo.

Doubtful Compromises

LESS ABSOLUTE outcomes would be safer and more equitable than extreme ones. The idea of partitioning Kosovo has been floating in Serbian nationalist circles for over a decade. The Serbian version would of course arrogate to the Serbs all

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the cultural and mineral wealth—Kosovo has 50 percent of the former Yugoslavia's lead, zinc, and nickel reserves. But the map could be drawn to balance advantages. The Albanians would get most of the territory. The Serbs would get land containing some of the medieval monasteries, while the others would be put under international protection.

The working assumption of partition is that the Serbian part of Kosovo would probably become an integral part of Serbia, while the Albanian part would become independent or would elect to join Albania. If partition were achieved by agreement, a war in Kosovo could probably be avoided, though the Serbs might attempt a pre-partition campaign of ethnic cleansing—a tactic they used with criminal effect in Bosnia. But there would be no guarantee of stability elsewhere, since the area-wide dangers would be the same as in the independence scenario.

Another compromise outcome, currently under active study, would make Kosovo a republic within Yugoslavia (the other republics would be Serbia and Montenegro). To have any chance of working, this approach would have to guarantee the Albanians full powers to run their own republic (with protection for Serbian residents, property, and monuments). Kosovo would become a kind of Chechnya, nominally under the parent state but effectively independent. Since Yugoslavia would be the parent state, and Milošević is currently president of Yugoslavia, the prospect of his meddling—whatever commitments he might make—would be real. This outcome would easily be the best for keeping the dominoes in place and thus for maintaining peace in the Balkans. Its major drawback is the residual authority it might concede to Serbia.

Neither of these compromise outcomes is currently acceptable to the two parties. Therefore outside pressure would have to be applied even to get them into a serious negotiation. Since the Europeans lack the trust of the Albanians, only the United States has the credentials to mediate a result. There is too much local hostility and mistrust to rely on incremental agreements; a comprehensive settlement should be the objective. Any agreement would have to be secured, at least for a time, by a NATO force configured on the Bosnian model but unencumbered by corrosive "exit strategies" or deadlines. In almost any outcome, the special problem of Macedonia would have to be addressed. The preventive UN force currently in Macedonia, now consisting of 750 American and Swedish troops, should be increased as a matter of urgency and its mandate strengthened to enable it to deal with ethnic conflict.

What if the United States makes a good faith offer to broker a final settlement only to have Milošević reject it and continue his oppressive tactics in Kosovo? It should then be clear that Milošević remained the principal obstacle to a solution and that no agreement would be possible as long as he remained in power. At that point the United States should adopt a policy of avoiding any actions that would assist his staying in power, while doing what it could to hasten his departure. This policy would not be likely to bring immediate or decisive results, but it would be a useful signal to disenchanted Serbs that, for America, Milošević is a pariah. Because of our misplaced gratitude to him for his compromises at Dayton over Bosnia, that is not the signal we are now conveying.

More and more Serbs are beginning to understand that Milošević has brought his people nothing but disaster. He has decimated the Serbian population of Croatia, humiliated and impoverished the Serbs in Bosnia, provoked the inexorable exodus of Serbs from Kosovo, and wrecked the economy of Serbia itself. His rule is not eternal. One day the gray falcon will come for him. And it will not promise him a heavenly kingdom. □

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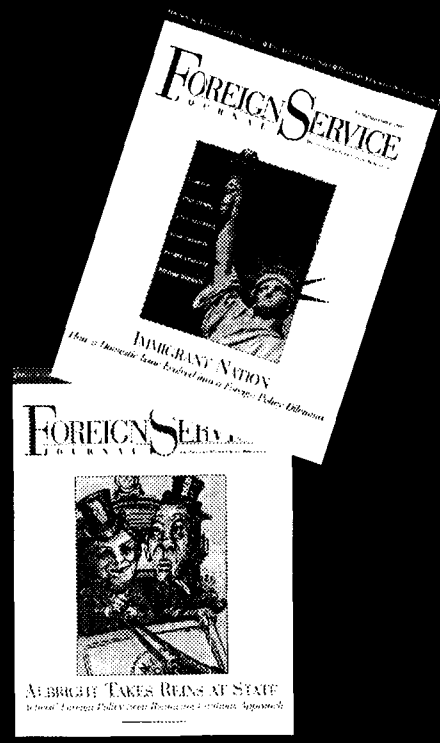

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In Asia's Mirror

From Commodore Perry to the IMF

Sebastian Mallaby

ASIA HAS BEEN laid low before. It has, in its moments of crisis, been forced to open up to the West before. These openings have been attended by an interesting kaleidoscope of moods, their usual pattern neatly captured in the life of just one man, both hero and anti-hero of the most dramatic Asian opening of all. His name is Takamori Saigo.

Saigo's story starts in mid-nineteenth century Japan: a Japan that is still a feudal state, divided by caste, virtually devoid of industry. After two and a half centuries of shunning contact with the outside world, Japan's proud isolation is breaking down. Americans and Europeans are pushing into Asia, demanding opportunities to trade, carving up China. In 1853 it is Japan's turn. An American force commanded by Commodore Matthew Perry appears uninvited in Tokyo Bay, demanding that Japan open up also. Saigo and a group of fellow samurai decide that Japan can only survive by being strong; they launch a modernizing revolution now known as the Meiji Restoration. The encrusted caste system is scrapped; a system of modern law is put in place; designs for weapons and industrial machines are procured from America and Europe. After its long hibernation, Japan's doors are suddenly thrown wide. Even today, Japanese still remember the Meiji Restoration of 1868 as the First Opening.

Then, barely a decade on, Saigo has a change of heart. The reforms needed to modernize Japan have destroyed the feudal privileges of his samurai friends. The samurai right to wear swords has been abolished; their public stipends have been cut and then eliminated. This fills Saigo with guilt: forced to choose between foreign modernity and the human bonds of old Japan, a true samurai ought to prefer loyalty. To make amends, Saigo leaves the government and assembles an army of 40,000 rebels, dedicated to the overthrow of the Westernizing state that he had earlier created. A bloody fight ensues; the rebellion fails; Saigo commits ritual suicide.

The rebellion, and the grisly death, took place over a century ago, in 1877. Yet in modern Japan Takamori Saigo is still something of a hero. Museums and statues commemorate him, politicians invoke his name, and since its appearance in 1975, a series of books about him has sold more than eight million copies. This fascination hinges on Saigo's paradoxical career: He understood the need to modernize and copy from the West, yet he sacrificed his life defending Japan's ancient character. The Japanese are captivated by this, because the struggle between these two conflicting instincts is the story of their country. At the Meiji Restoration, and again after the Second World War, and yet again when its economy collapsed in the early 1990s, Japan has responded to weakness by opening up to the

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West. And yet, each time, it has felt the powerful undertow of nationalism and nostalgia.

For anyone trying to make sense of Asia's current financial mess, Saigo's story is instructive. The humbling of Thailand, Indonesia, and South Korea has brought another grand opening to the West, like Japan's earlier openings. Asia is vulnerable, as Japan was in Saigo's time: its system of capitalism has been made to look primitive, its firms are in hock to Western creditors. And Westerners have dispatched to Asia the technocrats of the International Monetary Fund. In its spirit, if not in its details, the IMF's progress through Asia over the past year recalls the long-ago voyage of Commodore Perry.

WHEN PERRY visited Japan, he brought exotic gifts: a graph machine, maps, and a miniature steam train. Now the IMF brings credit lines: $17 billion for Thailand, $43 billion for Indonesia, $57 billion for South Korea. Perry brought a trade ultimatum along with his gifts. The IMF brings demands for high interest rates, greater transparency in financial institutions, greater openness to foreign investors, less government involvement in the allocation of credit, less cronyism. In theory, the IMF is a supranational arbiter, with the power to pursue policies independent of America; in practice, it has little more leeway than did Perry when he set sail, entrusted by President Fillmore with "full and discretionary powers" to deal with the Japanese as he saw fit. Nobody doubts that the IMF represents American views. From the start of the Asian crisis, its technocrats have worked hand in glove with Robert Rubin's Treasury Department, a cooperation facilitated by the fact that Rubin's deputy, Lawrence Summers, comes from the IMF's sister organization, the World Bank; while David Lipton, the Treasury's top international man, is a former IMF official.

If the IMF, like Perry, is bent upon asserting American economic ideas, then East Asians, like the Japanese of Perry's time, seem disposed to listen—at least initially. This is especially true in South Korea, where the onslaught of financial turmoil in December 1997 coincided with a presidential election. The voters blamed the country's economic chaos on the president, and therefore snubbed his chosen successor. In his place, they elected Kim Dae Jung, a challenger who had long criticized Korea's un-Western economic system. Kim blames financial turmoil on cronyism, and declares that the corrupt ties between government and business are best dissolved by deeper democracy, Western style. He has welcomed the foreign infiltration of South Korea's economy, taking on those who suspect that if outsiders buy Korean firms, Korea's independence will be compromised. In short, he has made all the arguments that believers in Westernization love to hear. Nicholas Kristof, writing in the *New York Times*, declared in February that Kim Dae Jung stands for a "new Korea and a new Asia: political democracy, market-oriented economics."

And yet, like Saigo before him, President Kim cannot escape the undertow of nationalism and nostalgia. Korea, after all, is a fiercely nationalistic place, held together by its citizens' desire to ward off the great powers (Russia, China, and Japan) that have historically threatened its sovereignty. Like Japan, Korea has long made a point of excluding foreign companies from its economy. Like Japan, it has promised Westernizing reforms before and only partially delivered on them. For these reasons, it is risky to talk of a "new Korea and a new Asia." The Westernizing promises of Kim Dae Jung, like those emanating from other Asian seats of power, are made in Takamori Saigo's shadow.

This shadow is already apparent. White-collar workers have protested against the IMF in downtown Seoul; the middle class throughout the region is indignant at the sudden tripling in the cost of consumer imports. Editorialists have attacked arrogant American imperialism. They have muttered about a second Opium War, an allusion to precisely the same humiliation of Asians by Westerners that alarmed the Japanese nation-

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alists of the nineteenth century. In Indonesia, President Suharto has resisted full implementation of the IMF's initial demands for sweeping reforms, growling that any change must conform to his nation's traditional belief in strong communities and families, protected by strong government. The "Berkeley mafia", a group of Indonesian technocrats that in the early stages of financial turmoil seemed to have the upper hand, has declined in influence. Instead, Suharto has installed as his deputy B.J. Habibie, the most prominent of Indonesia's "technologist" school of economic nationalists, who have long struggled for policy dominance with the technocrats.

None of this would surprise the Japanese of Takamori Saigo's time. Like Meiji Japan, Indonesia combines talk of Westernizing reforms needed to grow strong with anti-Western rhetoric. Suharto signed a deal with the IMF in November, and another one in January; but, after this second pact, the press published a photograph that captured the humiliation of the moment, strengthening the tide of anti-IMF resistance. In it, the president sits hunched over his pen; the head of the IMF looks on, glaring sternly, arms folded. As Seth Mydans later reported in the *New York Times*, this became the defining image of Indonesia's wounded pride. A local newspaper headline demanded angrily, "Who's stronger, the IMF or us?" "Indonesia is a proud country", an Indonesian political scientist told Mydans. "We have been known to choose to go hungry rather than give in to outside pressure." Since the spring, frustration with foreigners and with Suharto's rule has prompted student riots. And so the nationalist undertow has pulled strong, even while the government has continued to work with the IMF, signing a third deal in April. In Indonesia, as in Saigo's Japan, the adoption of Western policies and ideas is not an instantaneous or continuous thing. It pushes ahead, pauses, staggers back a bit before again advancing.

The stop-go spread of Western ideas around the world has an interesting effect on Western intellectuals. Because the gains are always gradual, reversible, ambiguous, there is always room to debate whether they are real at all, or whether, to follow Samuel Huntington, we are in for an extended clash of unreconciled civilizations. At any given time, skeptics of Westernization will be heard, arguing that the backsliding may completely undo recent advance, that the triumph of Western ideas will never happen. At any given time, as well, bolder voices will retort that the tide of history is flowing in the West's favor, and that all setbacks are temporary. In Japan, the ambiguity of the Westernizing advance is reflected in the popular fascination with Saigo's paradoxical career. Americans, meanwhile, have found a personification of the same ambiguity in General Douglas MacArthur.

The Meaning of MacArthur

THERE IS A famous analogue to the newspaper picture of the humbled President Suharto, signing what amounts to a surrender of economic sovereignty. After the Second World War, when MacArthur headed the American occupation government in Japan, he had himself photographed with Emperor Hirohito. In that photo, the general is huge, relaxed, his shirt unbuttoned at the neck; the emperor is tiny, nervous, imprisoned in a starched collar. The picture spoke volumes, and it was meant to. It was taken at the start of the occupation in September 1945, a time the Japanese remember as their Second Opening. The victorious MacArthur had grand ambitions for the triumph of Western ideas. The New Deal technocrats on his staff were drawing up plans to remake Japan's economy and society along Western lines: they drafted new school curricula, throwing out the nationalistic texts used before the war and replacing them with American-style civics lessons; they broke up the big conglomerates that dominated the economy; they legalized trade unions and organized elections. To make way for reform, the nationalist leaders of Japan's wartime regime were purged from public life. Supremely confident in American

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power and ideas, MacArthur likened Japan to a small boy: backward, immature, but certain to grow up to be like America-the-father.

For a long time after the war, most American writing on Japan accepted MacArthur's image. But, as Japan did grow to match American prosperity, the first doubts surfaced. Mature Japan turned out to resemble America less than many had hoped: its democracy was shallow, its economy was closed to foreigners, its officials were suspicious of America's laisser-faire orthodoxy. Moreover, this different Japan was not always friendly to American interests. Starting in the 1970s, Japan's trade surplus became a bogeyman for Western protectionists. And so, around the same time, a new view of MacArthur arose, focusing less on the success of his Westernizing reforms and more on his failure to implement them fully. The photo of MacArthur, once an image of Western triumph, became instead an image of its hubris.

This adjustment has been accompanied by a revision of MacArthur's view that Japan would grow to resemble America. "Revisionists" urge Americans instead to accept that Japan's economy follows rules unlike those described in Western texts: its bureaucrats will never relinquish their role in guiding the economy, its big firms will always remain brutally focused on exports. The Japanese system, the revisionists go on, has been more successful at producing growth than the American one—so Americans should get used to the idea of *Japan as Number One*, to *Trading Places* with the Japanese, in the title words of two typical books espousing this view. And so America should take a tough line in trade negotiations with Japan, resisting the fantasy that Westernization will bring the automatic liberalization of the Japanese economy and with it the harmonization of U.S. and Japanese global interests.

Since the 1980s, the influence of this revisionism has been a good measure of America's mood. After Wall Street's 1987 crash America felt down, so glum revisionist warnings about the invincibility of Japan found a ready audience. From the early 1990s, however, America's fortunes rose and Japan's sunk, and the revisionist influence sunk with them. To the extent that revisionist arguments still carried weight, they did so by extending their argument from Japan to the rest of East Asia, and by citing the region's economic boom as evidence for the power of some composite Asian model. James Fallows did this with his 1994 book, *Looking at the Sun*, concluding that, "Western societies should concentrate on whether and how to remake themselves."

The Asian crisis, one might think, would reduce revisionist influence still further. Curiously, this does not appear to be happening. Even though America is prosperous, and even though Asia has been laid low, a new version of revisionism is gaining ground. This version resists seeing the IMF in the way that I have done, as a kind of latter-day Commodore Perry. Instead, it disparages the IMF and predicts that it will fail. It suggests, in effect, a parallel between the IMF and MacArthur—who, in the revisionist view of the world, was an abject failure.

A Trio of Doubters

SOME WESTERN doubters are long-standing revisionists, and up to a point their views can be discounted. It is only to be expected, for example, that Chalmers Johnson, the academic father of revisionist writing on Japan, should dispute the idea that Asia's crisis will lead the region to Westernize. After all, Johnson made his name by celebrating the merits of Japan's un-Western industrial policy. Writing in *The Nation* (February 23, 1998), Johnson insists that it would be disastrous to prescribe Westernization as a cure for Asia's current ills.

In his view, the Asian crisis has nothing to do with the flaws of the region's economic model. In 1994 China devalued its currency by 35 percent. Between April 1995 and April 1997 the yen fell 60 percent against the dollar.

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According to Johnson, these devaluations, rather than any deeper structural cause, landed the rest of Asia in trouble. Export growth in South Korea and in ASEAN fell from 30 percent in 1995 to zero by mid-1996. Given that the whole region had borrowed lavishly in the expectation of a continued export boom, a temporary liquidity crisis was inevitable. None of this, Johnson goes on, should obscure Asia's strengths. Cooperation between governments and firms, now derided as "crony capitalism", has served Asians well for most of the postwar period. Governments identified which Western technologies to import and apply, and organized consortia of private firms to do the work. This central planning prevented firms from duplicating each other's efforts.

Johnson goes even further than this: he claims that the Asian crisis has actually strengthened the case for some aspects of the Asian model. The economies of Northeast Asia have been hostile to inward investment. The Japanese, with their famously high savings rates, financed their investment from their own cash, while Koreans and Taiwanese tried to emulate this model by cranking up savings rates through a variety of pro-savings policies. As Johnson sees it, the region's current financial crisis shows the virtue of this way of doing things: if you depend on foreigners for capital, you can never tell when they will suddenly rise up and holler for repayment. The lesson is to redouble devotion to the autarky that is central to one version of the Asian way. Greater Western-style economic openness, of the sort the IMF prescribes, would only store up future trouble.

While Johnson's views may not come as a surprise, he is nonetheless in surprising company. For his attack on Western triumphalism finds support from a broad swathe of American conservatives. Trent Lott, the leader of the Republican majority in the Senate, spoke for many in his party when he denounced the IMF's efforts in Asia and called for the removal of its managing director. With a few exceptions, conservative intellectuals have taken the same view. The most prominent economist in this group is Harvard's Martin Feldstein, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under Ronald Reagan, that most triumphalist of presidents.

Writing in *Foreign Affairs* in the spring, and speaking at a recent *National Interest* dinner, Feldstein has agreed with Johnson that Asia's problems reflect incidental shocks such as Chinese and Japanese devaluation, rather than anything more profound. And he has gone beyond Johnson in painting the IMF as the agent of MacArthurian Western hubris: "A nation's desperate need for short-term financial help does not give the IMF the moral right to substitute its technical judgments for the outcomes of the nation's political process." Rather than trying to restructure Asian economies along American lines, Feldstein would prefer the IMF to restrict itself to demanding sensible budgets and monetary policy. For, like Johnson, he is unpersuaded that the Asian crisis reveals Asia's need to adopt Western ideas. The "current structure of the Korean economy", he contends, "may now well be suited to Korea's stage of economic and political development and to Korean cultural values stressing thrift, self-sacrifice, patriotism, and worker solidarity."

IF IT IS SURPRISING to find Feldstein in this camp, it is even more intriguing to find Francis Fukuyama there. Fukuyama is, famously, the author of "The End of History?", an essay published in these pages in 1989. In that article, he sounded as confident of Western supremacy as MacArthur ever was. "The triumph of the West", he wrote on the article's first page, "is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism." And yet buried in Fukuyama's robust phrases, there lurked an interesting footnote in which he recalled that Alexandre Kojève, the French Hegelian who had himself declared the end of history half a century before, later revised his views. "I use the example of Japan with some caution", Fukuyama is forced to confess, "since Kojève late in his life came to

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conclude that Japan . . . proved that the universal homogeneous state was not victorious and that history had perhaps not ended."

On the face of it, the Asian crisis gives Fukuyama an opportunity to lay the doubts of this footnote to rest—to build on his earlier confidence, which reflected the collapse of communism, with new pronouncements taking in the humbling of Asia. If the memory of Kojève's uncertainty were not enough to drive him to this, then contemporary uncertainty about the end of history thesis surely should have been sufficient. For, having enjoyed instantaneous acclaim, Fukuyama's confidence in the triumph of the West was soon challenged by Samuel Huntington's opposing anticipation of a clash of civilizations, an anticipation that drew explicitly on Asia's economic boom. By 2020, Huntington pointed out, Asia would contain four of the world's five largest economies, and would account for more than 40 percent of the world's GDP. This shift of gravity toward Asia would mean, in a geo-intellectual sense, a shift away from Western laisser-faire and toward the Asian model.

Curiously, Fukuyama shows no appetite for exploiting Asia's troubles to re-open his argument with Huntington. He is prepared to attack Asian triumphalism, but he attacks American triumphalism as well. Writing in *Commentary*, he deflates the "Asian values" school, recalling that a century ago Confucianism was blamed for Asia's economic sloth, and that Asian growth only became possible after Asia rejected deeply embedded values such as the mandarin disdain for commerce. In equally robust terms, he clobbers the Asian claim that authoritarian government promotes growth, pointing out that it can equally well underpin kleptocracies like Indonesia's. The Asian crisis "will puncture the idea of Asian exceptionalism", Fukuyama writes. It will serve to remind the world that the laws of economics apply in Asia as they do elsewhere, that Asian values do not represent some magic formula for overcoming them.

This is perfectly lucid stuff. But nowhere does Fukuyama take the next step: he breathes not a word about the "unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism" that he celebrated in his end of history article. Instead, he sympathizes with those proponents of Asian values who focused on "the effects of excessive individualism in Western societies, and particularly in the United States." Individual freedom breeds innovation and entrepreneurship, to be sure. But it also brings bad things, Fukuyama says, like crime and illegitimacy. Asked why Asia's financial crisis does not prompt him to restate his old confidence in Westernization, Fukuyama speaks with clear distaste of "chest-thumping in America." Nine years ago he was hailed for his clear declaration of faith in the idea of the West. Today, not even Fukuyama is prepared to defend Fukuyama.

One can only marvel at Feldstein and Fukuyama, and at the general reluctance of American conservatives to celebrate the latest evidence from Asia for the superiority of their Western system. For the careers of Takamori Saigo and General MacArthur permit a far more expansive conception of the Western idea, and no amount of historical revisionism should be allowed to conceal this. It is true, certainly, that Japan's openings to the outside world have been followed by nationalist backlash, and Indonesia's bucking of the first two IMF plans suggests that one should not rule out the possibility of backlash this time either. But neither in 1877 nor after 1945 did the nationalist backlash prove lasting. After Saigo's brief rebellion was put down, Japan Westernized and modernized for four glorious decades, falling back into virulent anti-Western nationalism only in the 1930s. Similarly, although MacArthur failed to implement all his reforms, Japan nonetheless dropped emperor-worship, hosted (and later paid for) large American bases on its soil, and replaced military rule with imperfect democracy. Whatever the undertow of nationalism in Japan, it is difficult to argue that the current of the past century and a half has run in anything other than a westerly direction.

There is every reason to believe that the

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same will prove true in Asia now. For all the bucking, and despite violent student riots, Indonesia is still working with the IMF, while Thailand and South Korea are starting to liberalize their financial systems in keeping with the IMF's prescriptions. In all these countries, the IMF reforms will not be swallowed whole; there will be much foot-dragging and a few outright reversals. But it is probable that quite a number of its ideas will stick, making Asian economies less state-directed, more transparent, and more open to foreigners: in short, more Western. This is likely not just because the IMF reforms are sensible, though this is largely true. It is likely because, even before the Asian crisis arrived, some of the region's leaders were thinking of Westernizing anyway, and because others who spoke out against Westernization have since softened their tunes tellingly.

Two Blunted Challenges

TO APPRECIATE this point, it is necessary to distinguish between two types of Asian challenge to the liberal-capitalist model. The first comes primarily from Northeast Asia—from South Korea and Japan—and consists of an economic style that differs markedly from Western laisser-faire. The second comes primarily from Southeast Asia—notably from Malaysia and Singapore—and consists of a rhetorical assertion of non-Western social values. The first challenge centers on issues like the usefulness of industrial policy, of state-directed lending, and of policies to induce high savings rates. The second challenge is about respect for the group rather than the individual, for state authority as opposed to citizens' rights and freedoms.

It is the first challenge, the one presented by Northeast Asia's economic model, that had started to unravel even before Asia's currencies plunged in 1997. In Japan's case, this was not surprising, for it had already undergone the collapse of its equity and property markets at the start of the decade. As a result of this shock, Japan's technocrats were confronted with the limits of their own competence, and public opinion began to favor greater economic freedoms. For most of this decade, a shifting cast of coalition governments has proposed deregulation plans for retailing, for distribution, and most recently, for financial services. Vested interests have delayed some of these reforms, but the argument in Japan is no longer about whether to dismantle un-Western controls on the economy—it is about how quickly to do so. Intellectually, Japan's economic model is dead.

Less obviously, but more remarkably given the absence of pre-1997 financial shocks, South Korea has also spent much of this decade reconsidering its economic model. Until the market for semiconductors collapsed in 1996, Korea's economy was performing splendidly. Even so, it was impossible to spend half an hour talking to a Korean economist in or out of government without hearing about the need to deregulate, to break up the conglomerates known as *chaebol*, to create a more Western style of corporate governance by fostering sophisticated banks and equity investors. In the 1990s foreigners were allowed for the first time to buy shares in Korean companies, a handful of Korean firms were allowed to raise capital offshore, and plans were drawn up to reduce the anti-competitive power of the *chaebol*. In 1996 Korea abolished the Economic Planning Board, which had masterminded the government's industrial policy. When Feldstein argues that Korea's original economic model may still suit the country well, he is expressing a view shared by few Korean economists. The Northeast Asian challenge to the liberal-capitalist model is no longer taken seriously even by the supposed challengers.

This leaves the second Asian challenge to Western confidence in its ideas: the challenge from Southeast Asia. Unlike South Korea and Japan, the economies of this region are not markedly un-Western. They are wide open to foreign investment rather than being hostile to it, and they have no particular faith in industrial policy. It has therefore been hard to

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cite the region's economic success as a challenge to the laisser-faire ideas of Western economists. Their success has been used to tweak the West in a different way, for that success has been attributed to Southeast Asia's un-Western respect for authority. Firm government, ready to silence bumptious critics, has ensured political and social stability, focusing national resources on growth. Firm parents, ready to discipline their children, have preserved the traditional Confucian respect for education. To be sure, this discipline may have dulled the free-thinking and open criticism that keeps centers of authority honest and accountable. But, according to the proponents of Asian values, this cost was trivial when set against the gains ensured by orderliness.

So long as Southeast Asia continued to grow spectacularly, it was difficult to refute these ideas. Now things are a bit different. The dangers inherent in the repression of criticism, secrecy, and lack of accountability have become rather obvious: unaccountable officials have funneled cash into hopeless schemes that lined the pockets of their families and friends; secrecy has damaged investor confidence, exacerbating the flight of foreign capital. To their considerable credit, most advocates of the Asian way acknowledge these problems. The most telling examples of this candor come from the countries whose leaders once spoke most forcefully on behalf of Asian values.

At the start of the financial crisis last year, Malaysia's nationalist prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, responded in his usual form by denouncing Westerners (particularly Jewish ones) for his country's troubles. But by October he had changed tack, dismissing the contention that the twenty-first century would be the Asian century as "a mirage mired in an incredible swamp of arrogance" (*New Straits Times*, 10/23/97). Although Mahathir still shrinks from saying that Asians should import Western systems, his putative successor is more forthright. In February Anwar Ibrahim, Malaysia's deputy prime minister, declared that the way out of Asia's economic malaise lay in deregulation, competition, and transparency. "You have to dismantle monopolies . . . of your cronies and family members . . . because they go against the grain of transparency, accountability and good governance," he declared; and he went on to denounce the idea that democracy, freedom, honesty, and accountability are merely "luxuries of the West", incompatible with Asian values (*Bangkok Post*, 2/8/98).

In March 1998 Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew, the foremost champion of Asian values, gave interviews to *Time* and *Fortune*. Though he insisted that Asian values—hard work, high savings, an emphasis on education—promoted fast growth, much of what he said sounded remarkably humble. Having spent a good part of the 1990s talking up the supposed link between Confucian values and Asia's miraculous economic growth, he was now prepared to step back. "There are certain weaknesses in Confucianism", he acknowledged. "From time to time in the history of China, whenever there was weak government, Confucianism led to nepotism and favoritism. . . . Unfortunately, quite a few of the countries that have been growing fast have this incestuous system where banks are owned by conglomerates and lend money to another section in the group without proper feasibility studies." When *Time*'s interviewer suggested that curing these ills would involve Asia swallowing Western ideas, Lee seemed undismayed. "If it is the best way of doing business", he replied, "it doesn't matter where it comes from."

America's Peculiar Angst

THIS, precisely, is the case for the triumph of the West: freedom, private ownership, and individual responsibility are efficient as well as desirable in themselves. It does not matter who understood this first; they comprise "the best way of doing business", as Lee says, so eventually they will be universally adopted. If Lee Kuan Yew, an Asian advocate of Asian ways, can bring him-

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self to talk like this, one might reasonably expect something still more forthright from Western commentators, and especially from conservatives. Instead, one hears polite appreciation of Asia's strengths, and a trembling reluctance to intervene abroad. Conservatives are reluctant to judge rival systems, and to declare the American one superior. They are guilty of precisely that relativism for which they have traditionally excoriated liberals.

A century and a half ago, when Perry succeeded in opening Japan to trade, Americans rejoiced that America's manifest destiny, its mission to spread free trade around the world, had triumphed over Japan's attachment to its feudal order. Walt Whitman was moved to verse: "I chant America, the Mistress / I chant a greater supremacy." One finds flashes of the same exuberance these days from Alan Greenspan, the Fed chairman; from members of the Clinton administration, in unguarded moments; from commentators such as Mort Zuckerman, who in the May/June issue of *Foreign Affairs* declares that the next century will belong to America just as surely as the current one. There are a few conservatives among these optimists, to be sure: Lawrence Lindsey, a former governor of the Federal Reserve, declared, "We have shown our system of corporate management to be the best on the planet" (*Weekly Standard*, 1/12/98). But the striking phenomenon is not the extent of this exuberance, but rather the fact that it is less than universally shared. A surprising number of Republicans—politicians and their intellectual allies—are too afraid of hubris to chant anything much at all. Not for the first time, we are confronted with America's peculiar angst in the twilight of this century.

America enjoys world dominance in diplomacy, warfare, industry, science, media, and the sheer sense of how to live. And yet the old Reaganite confidence in American power and ideas has given way to a new kind of conservatism, one susceptible to the declinism of the revisionist school. The new kind of conservative worries about the loss of values in America, and wonders whether Asian values might teach Americans something. The new conservative notes that many Americans are unwilling to intervene abroad on behalf of American ideas, and caves in to this defeatism. Rather than celebrate Japan's Westernization over the half century since MacArthur's reform, the new conservative is more inclined to focus on what MacArthur failed to accomplish. Rather than celebrate the Westernizing Meiji Restoration that Takamori Saigo helped to bring about, he broods lugubriously on his failed counter-rebellion.

To anyone who has pondered the confusion of the post-Cold War world, none of this may come as a surprise. And yet there is something special about the Asian case, because it presents America with so clear an opportunity to spread its worldview at almost no cost to itself. There is much to be said for the idea that if America cannot persuade allies to back its policy on Cuba or Iraq, then it should shoulder the burden of activism warily, for it will carry a high price in diplomatic capital and treasure. A hegemon should proceed cautiously, by all means. But, in Asia's case, America has the IMF to do Commodore Perry's job. Walt Whitman would have marveled at this good fortune. □

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Chalmers Johnson:

SEBASTIAN MALLABY'S screed is the mirror image of what Moscow's old Marx-Lenin Institute used to do—try to convince people that, in Mallaby's words, "the tide of history is flowing in the West's [conversely, the Soviet's] favor." Like his magazine, *The Economist* of London, Mallaby is an ideologist for the economic system that exists at least formally in the United States, Britain, and some other English-speaking countries (places that he and his fellow defenders of the faith like to call "the West" in their metaphysical writings). Just as the biggest problem for Mallaby's predecessors at *Pravda* was to find evidence of proletarian immiseration in the democracies, the biggest problem for the American triumphalists is to explain East Asia in ideologically acceptable terms.

These ideologists did not even notice the enrichment of East Asia until after it had become self-sustaining, could not explain it using their Nobel Prize-certified textbooks, and now predict that it will either collapse or start to copy the United States since no other outcome is "theoretically" possible. They want people to believe that "America enjoys world dominance in diplomacy, warfare, industry, science, media, and the sheer sense of how to live", as implausible as this is on the surface, and they insist that it is only a matter of time until the American way of life is "universally adopted."

The true mark of ideology is not what it asserts but what it leaves out. The ideologist suppresses evidence that contradicts what he or she is trying to sell. The group of scholars, journalists, businessmen, and government officials that Mallaby so disdainfully calls "revisionists" were in fact the first to investigate how Japan became the world's richest big country in per capita terms rather than simply defining Japan as America's "little brother." Even though Mallaby and other American triumphalists (e.g., Paul Gigot of the *Wall Street Journal)* now accept the revisionists' main premise—"an economic style [in Japan, South Korea, and elsewhere in East Asia] that differs markedly from Western laisser-faire"—they must still denounce revisionism because it subverts their ideological conviction that the West will triumph.

What Mallaby and his fellow true believers do not want to discuss includes the following:

1) Japan is the leading source of long-term capital for the world today, whereas the United States is the world's biggest debtor nation. The United States is financing its mountainous debts with the help of Japanese savers.

2) Japan's savings would be better used to bail out its own failed banks and reflate the Japanese economy so that it could serve as a locomotive of growth for the rest of East Asia. This, however, would cause a recession in the United States that would cripple Japan's export machine. So our two economies remain locked together in a perverted embrace.

3) Standing behind the current economic crisis in East Asia is serious overcapacity in manufacturing, exacerbated by American multinationals moving many American jobs to low wage areas, thereby undercutting demand in the United States. So far from the East Asian economic crisis being a sign of "the triumph of the West", it more seriously portends a potential collapse of global demand and depression.

4) Mallaby's magazine likes to think that Japan does not change because it is run by bureaucrats (something *The Economist* used to deny) and beset by crony capitalism. Both may be true but are irrelevant. The Japanese

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trust their bureaucrats more than their politicians and also admire how successfully the Chinese are dismantling some of their Leninist institutions while avoiding the disasters of Yeltsin's Russia. They cannot think of a single example in which a foreign nation listened to Mallaby's "technocrats of the International Monetary Fund" and got anything better than Russia's mafia capitalism or Latin America's permanent dependency. Thus, Japan's bureaucrats will continue to do things their way.

Mallaby's most serious ideological distortion is to omit the United States from the East Asian crisis. He notes casually that Japan "hosted (and later paid for) large American bases on its soil." If he thinks the locals are willing hosts, he should visit Okinawa. Those bases for 100,000 American troops in Japan and South Korea got there exactly the same way the former Soviet Union's bases in former East Germany and Poland did—through conquest and Cold War military intervention. Japan is America's East Germany, its richest Cold War satellite, and the primary beneficiary of American militarism in East Asia. Japan still finds this status useful. It therefore pays to support foreign troops in Japan, helped reelect Bill Clinton by keeping Japanese capital flowing to the United States, and pretends to listen to American advice.

This charade will continue until some crisis forces either the Americans or the Japanese to face up to how the world has changed around them. When that happens we will see what form of capitalism has the strength to survive. But I wouldn't place all my bets on the longevity of the insanely inflated New York Stock Exchange. □

Chalmers Johnson is president of the Japan Policy Research Institute.

Martin Feldstein:

CONTRARY TO THE theme of Sebastian Mallaby's essay and to many of those whose views he cites, I believe that the recent currency crises in Southeast Asia and in Korea should not be seen as a test of the fundamental economic strategies of those countries. The currency collapse in Thailand and its neighbors is just what conventional economics would predict in any country that had an overvalued and fixed exchange rate. The same can be said of Indonesia and Malaysia. Korea's problems had a different origin: allowing some of its financial institutions to incur substantial short-term dollar liabilities and to invest those funds in risky and longer term assets. The severity of the subsequent collapse throughout the region and of the economic downturn that followed reflect the management of the crisis rather than the fundamental features of these economies. It's worth looking more carefully at the problems in Southeast Asia and in Korea to see clearly that they are not related to such "fundamental" features as government-business relations, labor market rules, the degree of import protection, the reluctance to permit foreign ownership, and other features of these economies that have been blamed for the current troubles and taken as harmful aspects of Asian economic policy.

The Thai baht collapsed because Thailand's overvalued exchange rate produced massive and sustained current account deficits with the rest of the world. When those current account deficits surged to 8 percent of Thailand's GDP in 1995 and 1996, creditors became increasingly nervous and sought to reduce their exposure. The Thai government tried to stem this withdrawal of funds but eventually gave in to the inevitable currency decline. No country has been able to

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sustain such large current account deficits. Although the combination of high interest rates, promises of fixed exchange rates, and stories about special conditions may keep funds coming to finance such current account deficits for a few years, eventually fear exceeds greed and foreign investors want out.

The current account deficits of Indonesia and Malaysia were also unsustainably large: over 5 percent of GDP in Malaysia and over 4 percent in Indonesia. While no one could predict when their fixed exchange rates would collapse, such a change was inevitable.

Korea did not have a serious current account problem. Although the current account deficit had risen temporarily in 1996 (because of the decline of the world semiconductor market), by early 1997 Korea was heading toward current account balance. Its problem was weak bank supervision that allowed short-term foreign liabilities to exceed foreign exchange reserves.

The impact of the currency collapse in Asia was not dissimilar to what happened a few years back in Mexico or in the 1980s throughout Latin America. A currency decline and the jump in interest rates that follows weakens creditors and undermines banks. The economy is forced to contract in order to reduce imports. This is the standard experience and says nothing special about Asia.

The recent situation was exacerbated by the IMF's policy response. Instead of emphasizing that these are basically sound and healthy economies that were facing a temporary liquidity problem, the IMF declared that these were unsound, mismanaged, and corrupt systems that needed fundamental reforms. This contributed to the sense of panic and frightened away creditors and investors. Instead of seeking to meet immediately with representatives of the creditors and debtors to arrange for a smooth restructuring of loans, the IMF gathered a huge war chest of potential financial aid that it said would only be available as those countries reformed. This too undermined confidence and made adjustment slower and more difficult than it might have been.

There are of course problems with the Asian economies, just as there are with the economies of Europe, Latin America, and the United States. The Asian economies would no doubt outgrow some of their current policies and procedures as they mature and as their incomes rise. But there was no moral or economic justification for the IMF to use the period of economic crisis to force such changes on these countries. And there is no reason to interpret this textbook currency crisis as evidence of a more fundamental weakness of the Asian economies. □

Martin Feldstein is president of the National Bureau of Economic Research and professor of economics at Harvard University.

Francis Fukuyama:

MUCH AS I appreciate Sebastian Mallaby's invitation to get on a pedestal and thump my chest about how right I was, I will decline the opportunity. I do believe that the Asian crisis vindicates my argument in *The End of History and the Last Man*, namely that economic modernization brings about a convergence of large institutions in the direction of both democracy and market-oriented economics. I find it quite gratifying that the "Asian values" argument has been put to rest once and for all, and that the long-run costs of authoritarianism have become more widely recognized.

On the other hand, Mallaby wants to read into my book a more caricatured and extreme argument than was actually made, and he ignores completely the book I wrote in the interim, *Trust*. The latter argues that democratic capitalism at the end of history is a big

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tent that permits considerable cultural variation among capitalist societies. Chest-thumping obscures a more nuanced analysis of what is a rather complex set of events.

There are at least two levels to the crisis that began with the fall of the Thai baht in the summer of 1997. The first is macroeconomic and has to do with the fact that poorly regulated financial institutions in Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, and other countries across the region facilitated the loading up by private firms on short-term dollar-denominated debt, which led to a severe liquidity crisis when the dollar appreciated against most other world currencies and especially the yen. This type of problem has been experienced by virtually every capitalist country at some point in its development; everyone, including Asian policymakers, agrees that the problem exists and needs urgently to be fixed through a combination of injections of liquidity, debt restructuring, and strengthening of financial institutions.

The second level concerns microeconomic policies regarding corporate governance, firm structure, credit allocation mechanisms, labor markets, and the like. It is in this area that Asian states and societies have maintained distinctive institutions that differ in key ways from their Western counterparts, such as state allocation of credit to facilitate sectoral transitions (industrial policy), the *chaebol* (or giant conglomerates) in Korea, the networks of family businesses in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and lifetime employment in Japan. These microeconomic policies lay at the core of the competitiveness debate in the late 1980s between proponents of industrial policy like Chalmers Johnson and James Fallows, on the one hand, and more orthodox market-oriented types, including most of the economics profession on the other. These policies have become highly problematic and lie at the root of Japan's stagnating GDP, and if persisted in will account for declining long-term rates of growth in the states that maintain them. But they were not heavily implicated in the currency crisis of 1997-98, which is what allows people like Chalmers Johnson and many Asian officials to continue to assert that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with interventionist economic policies in the region.

It would not be surprising if many American economists and officials, from Bob Rubin, Larry Summers, and Stanley Fisher on down, did not feel a sense of *Schadenfreude* over Asia's current troubles. After having been lectured to for a decade on the superiority of everything Asian from firms maximizing market share rather than stockholder value to authoritarian politics, they feel a justifiable sense of satisfaction that Asia no less than other parts of the world must obey the laws of economics. So it is perhaps understandable that they have gone on to use the opportunity of a liquidity crisis to impose a host of microeconomic policy reforms on the prostrate region. Instead of dealing with the problem of short-term liquidity, the IMF has undertaken to restructure many of the basic institutions in places like Indonesia and South Korea—hence Martin Feldstein feeling that the IMF is getting into areas that are none of its business.

In the long run, the economists are probably correct that most of these microeconomic reforms are in the best interests of the countries involved, and I therefore expect to see a convergence in economic and political institutions between Asia and the West over the next generation. But there is something to be said for prudence (usually regarded as a conservative virtue) as well: global competitive pressures are rapidly driving countries to drop practices like state-directed credit allocation, employment guarantees, protected monopolies, and the like. But the United States is not necessarily better off with the IMF driving this process, MacArthur-like (as Mallaby would prefer), since this creates a tremendous amount of nationalistic resentment. Unlike the situation in 1945, it is not clear to these countries that they have lost a war rather than a single battle. It is also a bit disingenuous. The IMF did not see anything wrong with Suharto's cronyism last summer, but now they have suddenly gotten religion

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and are intervening in the Indonesian political process in a very intimate manner. It is hard to have a lot of confidence that they know what they are doing.

The deeper problem is a conceptual one. Many Americans talk today as if a single currency crisis had wiped away forty-five years of historically unprecedented rates of growth, and that it was obvious that these countries could never do well violating so many of the liberal economic policies currently in favor in Washington. And yet they did: for most of the postwar period South Korea's average rate of tariff protection and capital controls was higher than that of Argentina, and yet it succeeded in making itself the world's twelfth-largest economy. Others sweep Japan's "crony capitalism" into the same basket as Ferdinand Marcos, and yet what was remarkable about the informal, personalistic mechanisms for credit allocation in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan was how clean they had been over a very extended period of time. A fascinating World Bank study suggested last year that it is the quality of governance—that is, a country's administrative efficiency, lack of corruption, and devotion to public ends—that determines the rate of economic growth, and not so much the specific economic policies it follows.

While all that was true in the past, liberalization remains necessary in Asia much as it does for many countries in continental Europe. As the level of economic development increases and countries like Japan and Korea reach the global technological frontier, markets become much more efficient than states in allocating capital and disciplining firms. But within the basic institutional structure of democracy and markets, countries will continue to hold on tenaciously to degrees of cultural difference, and will choose to balance freedom and equality in different ways. It would be very odd indeed to conclude that the central Western idea, the one now victorious over much of the globe, must be equated with whatever particular set of policies the technocrats at the IMF and Treasury departments happen to subscribe to at the present moment. □

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Counterfactual History

The *Style* section of the *Washington Post* (4/5/98) ran a competition in which "you were asked to alter some fact of history, and tell us how things would have changed."

Two of the (non-winning) entries:

• What if Hitler had been accepted into art school in 1906, and given up politics? Mussolini later has to go it alone. When 'Casablanca' is filmed, the actors in the bar scene try to compete against 'La Marseillaise' with 'That's Amore.' The movie bombs. (*Elden Carnahan, Laurel*)

• What if the French had successfully repelled the Germans in 1940? They would have become a vainglorious, pompous, rude people with a ridiculous sense of their importance in world affairs. (*Jeff Chostner, Burke*)

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Can Asians Think?

Kishore Mahbubani

THIS is obviously a sensitive question. In this age of political correctness that we live in, just imagine the uproar that could be caused if I went to Europe or Africa and asked, "Can Europeans think?" or "Can Africans think?" You have to be Asian to ask the question "Can Asians think?"[1]

Given its sensitivity, let me explain both the reasons why and the context in which I raise the issue. First, I believe that if one had to ask one single, key question that could determine the future of the globe, it could well be "Can Asians think?" In 1996 Asians already made up 3.5 billion out of a global population of over 5 billion (or about 70 percent of the world population). By conservative projections, the Asian portion of the world population will increase to 5.7 billion in 2050 out of a global population of 9.87 billion, while the populations of North America and Europe will remain relatively constant at 374 million and 721 million, respectively. Clearly in the past few centuries, Europe, and more recently North America, have carried the larger share of the global burden in advancing human civilization. By 2050, when Europeans and North Americans make up one-tenth instead of one-sixth of the world's population, would it be fair for the remaining 90 percent of mankind to expect this 10 percent to continue to bear this burden? Realistically, can the rest of the world continue to ride on the shoulders of the West? If Asians double in population in the next fifty years, will they be able to carry their fair share of this burden?

Second, I am not asking this question about individual Asians in terms of limited thinking abilities. Clearly, Asians can master alphabets, add two plus two to make four, and play chess. However, throughout history there have been examples of societies that produced brilliant individuals but yet experienced a lot of grief collectively. The classic example of this is Jewish society. Per capita, Jews have contributed more brilliant minds, from Einstein to Wittgenstein and from Disraeli to Kissinger, than any other society. Yet, as a society, they have suffered so much, especially in the past century or so. (Let me stress that I am not speaking about the travails of Israel in modern times. I am speaking of the period from 135 A.D. when the Jews were forced to leave Palestine to 1948 when Israel was born.) Will the same happen to Asian societies, or will they be able to think well and ensure a better future for themselves?

Third, the time scale in which I am posing this question is not one of days, weeks,

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[1]This essay is an edited and updated version of a lecture delivered at the 7th International Conference on Thinking, held in Singapore in June 1997. It is also the lead essay in a collection of essays to be published this summer by Times Editions, Singapore (www.timesone.com.sg/te), entitled *Can Asians Think?*

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months, years, or even decades. I am looking at the question from the time scale of centuries, especially since we stand two years away from the new millennium. Arguably, the future course of world history in the next few centuries, as I will explain later, will depend on how Asian societies think and perform.

Back then to the question: "Can Asians think?" In a multiple-choice examination format, there would be three possible answers: "Yes", "No", or "Maybe." Before we decide which choice to tick off, let me make a case for each answer.

No, They Cannot Think

I WILL START with the reasons for the "No" answer, if only to refute any critics who may suggest that the question itself is manifestly absurd. If one looks at the record of the past thousand years, one can make a very persuasive case that Asians, Asian societies that is, cannot think.

Let us look at where Asian societies were a thousand years ago, say in the year 998. Then, the Chinese and the Arabs (i.e., Confucian and Islamic civilizations) led the way in science and technology, medicine and astronomy. The Arabs adopted both the decimal and the numbers 0 to 9 from India, and they learned how to make paper from the Chinese. The world's first university was founded just over a thousand years ago, in the year 971, in Cairo. By contrast, Europe was then still in what are familiarly known as the "Dark Ages", which had begun when the Roman Empire collapsed in the fifth century. As Will Durant summed it up in *The Age of Faith* (1994):

> Western Europe in the sixth century was a chaos of conquest, disintegration, and rebarbarization. Much of the classic culture survived, for the most part silent and hidden in a few monasteries and families. But the physical and psychological foundations of social order had been so disturbed that centuries would be needed to restore them. Love of letters, devotion to art, the unity and continuity of culture, the cross-fertilization of communicating minds, fell before the convulsions of war, the perils of transport, the economies of poverty, the rise of vernaculars, the disappearance of Latin from the East and of Greek from the West.

Against this backdrop, it would have been sheer folly to predict at the time that in the second millennium Chinese, Indian, and Islamic civilizations would slip into the backwaters of history while Europe would rise to be the first civilization ever to dominate the entire globe. But that, of course, is precisely what happened.

It did not come about suddenly. Until about the sixteenth century, the more advanced societies of Asia, while they had lost their primacy, were still on a par with those of Europe and there was no definite indication that Europe would leap far ahead. At that time, Europe's relative weakness was more apparent than its strength. It was not the most fertile area of the world, nor was it particularly populous—important criteria by the measure of the day, when the soil was the source of most wealth, and human and animal muscle of most power. Europe exhibited no pronounced advantages in the fields of culture, mathematics, engineering, navigation, or other technologies. It was also a deeply fragmented continent, consisting of a hodgepodge of petty kingdoms, principalities, and city-states. Further, at the end of the fifteenth century Europe was in the throes of a bloody conflict with the mighty Ottoman Empire, which was pushing its way, inexorably it seemed, toward the gates of Vienna.

Asian cultures, on the other hand, appeared to be thriving as late as the fifteenth century. China, for example, had a highly developed and vibrant culture. Its unified, hierarchic administration was run by well-educated Confucian bureaucrats who had given an unparalleled coherence and sophistication to Chinese society. China's technological prowess was also formidable. Printing by movable type had already appeared in the

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eleventh century. Paper money had expedited the flow of commerce and growth of markets. China's gargantuan iron industry, coupled with the invention of gunpowder, gave it immense military strength.

However, and amazingly, it was Europe that leapt ahead. Something almost magical happened to European minds, and this was followed by wave after wave of progress, from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, from the Scientific Revolution to the Industrial Revolution. While Asian societies degenerated into backwardness and ossification, European societies, propelled forward by new forms of economic organization, military-technical dynamism, political pluralism within the continent as a whole (if not within all individual countries), and the uneven beginnings of intellectual liberty (notably in Italy, Britain, and Holland), produced what would surely have been called at the time the "European miracle"—had there been an observing, superior civilization to mark the event. Because that mix of critical ingredients did not exist in any of the Asian societies, they appeared to stand still while Europe advanced to the center of the world stage. Colonization, which began in the late fifteenth century, and the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, augmented and entrenched Europe's dominant position.

Coming from a small state like Singapore, with a population of three million, it is a source of great wonder to me that a modest country like Portugal, also with a population of only a few million, could carve out territories like Goa, Macau, and Malacca from larger and more ancient civilizations. It was an amazing feat. But what is even more amazing is that it was done in the 1500s. The Portuguese colonizers were followed by the Dutch, then the French, then the British. Throughout all this period, for almost three centuries or more, Asian societies lay prostrate and allowed themselves to be surpassed and colonized by far smaller societies.

But the most painful thing that happened to Asia was not the physical but the mental colonization. Many Asians (including, I fear, many of my ancestors from South Asia) began to believe that Asians were inferior beings to the Europeans. Only this could explain how a few thousand British could control a few hundred million people in South Asia. If I am allowed to make a controversial point here, I would add that this mental colonization has not been completely eradicated in Asia, and many Asian societies are still struggling to break free from it.

It is truly astonishing that even today, as we stand on the eve of the twenty-first century and five hundred years on from the arrival of the first Portuguese colonizers in Asia, only one—I repeat, only one—Asian society has reached, in a comprehensive sense, the level of development that prevails generally in Europe and North America today. The Japanese mind was the first to be awakened in Asia, beginning with the Meiji Restoration in the 1860s. Japan was first considered developed and more or less accepted as an equal by 1902, when it signed the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

If Asian minds can think, why is there today only one Asian society that has been able to catch up with the West? I rest my case for the negative answer to our question. Those of you who want to tick "No" to the question "Can Asians think?" can proceed to do so.

The "Yes" Answer

LET ME NOW try to draw out the arguments for answering "Yes" to the question "Can Asians think?"

The first, and the most obvious one, is the incredible economic performance of East Asian societies in the past few decades. Japan's success, while it has not been fully replicated in the rest of Asia, has set off ripples that now, current problems notwithstanding, have the potential to become tidal waves. Japan's economic success was first followed by the "four tigers" (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore). Their success convinced the other Southeast Asian countries, especially Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, that they

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could do the same. Lately they have been followed by China, which now has the potential to overtake the United States and become the world's largest economy by 2020 or earlier. What is amazing is the pace of economic development. It took the British 58 years (up to 1780), America 47 years (1839), and Japan 33 years (1880s) to double their economic output. On the other hand, it took Indonesia 17 years, South Korea 11 years, and China 10 years to do the same. As a whole, from 1960 to 1990 the East Asian miracle economies grew more rapidly and more consistently than any other group of economies in the world. They averaged 5.5 percent annual per capita real income growth, outperforming every economy in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and even the OECD countries, which only averaged 2.5 percent growth in that period.

You cannot get good grades in an exam by luck. It requires intelligence and hard work. Similarly, you cannot get good economic performance, especially of the scale seen in Asia, simply by luck. It reflects both intelligence and hard work. And it is vital to stress here that the pace and scale of the economic explosion seen in Asia is unprecedented in the history of man. The chief economist of the World Bank, Joseph Stiglitz, captured this reality well in a recent *Asian Wall Street Journal* article (February 2, 1998):

> The East Asian 'miracle' was real. Its economic transformation of East Asia has been one of the most remarkable accomplishments in history. The dramatic surge in gross domestic product which it brought about is reflected in higher standards of living for hundreds of millions of Asians, including longer life expectancy, better health and education, and millions of others have rescued themselves from poverty, and now lead more hopeful lives. These achievements are real, and will be far more permanent than the present turmoil.

The confidence of East Asians has been further boosted by the numerous studies that now demonstrate their impressive academic performance, both in leading Western universities and at home. Today, many of the top students produced by American universities are of Asian origin. Educational excellence is an essential prerequisite for cultural confidence. To put it baldly, many Asians are pleased to wake up to the realization that their minds are not inferior. Most Westerners cannot appreciate the change because they could never directly feel the sense of inferiority many Asians experienced until recently.

The second reason why we might answer "Yes" to the question "Can Asians think?" is that a very vital mental switch is taking place in many Asian minds. For centuries, Asians have believed that the only way to progress was through emulation of the West. Yukichi Fukuzawa, a leading Meiji reformer, epitomized this attitude when he said in the late nineteenth century that for Japan to progress, it had to learn from the West. The other leading modernizers in Asia, from Sun Yat-sen to Jawaharlal Nehru, shared this fundamental attitude. The mental switch that is taking place in Asian minds today is that they no longer believe that the only way to progress is by copying; they now believe they can work out their own solutions.

This switch in Asian minds has taken place slowly and imperceptibly. Until a few decades ago, Western societies beckoned as beacons on the hill, living models of the most successful form of human societies: economically prosperous, politically stable, socially just and harmonious, ethically clean, and, all in all, providing the best possible conditions for their citizens to grow and thrive as individuals. These societies were not perfect but they were clearly superior, in all senses of the word, to any society outside the West. Until recently it would have been folly, and indeed inconceivable, for any Asian intellectual to suggest, "This may not be the path we want to take." Today this is what many Asians are thinking, privately if not publicly.

Overall, though, there is no question that Western societies still remain more successful

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than their East Asian counterparts. They retain fields of excellence in areas that no other society comes close to, in their universities, think tanks, and certainly in cultural realms. No Asian orchestra comes close in performance to the leading Western orchestras, even though the musical world in the West has been enriched by many brilliant Asian musicians.

Many Asians, however, are shocked by the scale and depth of social and economic problems that have afflicted many Western societies. In the case of North America, they are troubled by the relative breakdown of the family as an institution, the plague of drug addiction and its attendant problems, including crime, the persistence of ghettos and the perception that there has been a decline in ethical standards. This is exemplified by statistics provided by the U.S. government that reflect social trends for the period 1960-90. During that period, the rate of violent crime quadrupled, single parent families almost tripled, as did the number of U.S. state and federal prisoners. Asians are also troubled by the addiction of Europeans to their social security nets, despite clear evidence that these nets now hold down their societies and have created a sense of gloom about long-term economic prospects. In previous decades, when East Asians visited North America and Western Europe they envied the high standard of living and better quality of life in those societies. Today, though, the high standards of living remain in the West but Asians no longer consider them as role models. They are beginning to believe that they can attempt something different.

A simple metaphor may explain what Western minds would see if they could peer into Asian minds. Until recently, most of those minds shared the general assumption that the developmental path of all societies culminated in the plateau on which most Western societies now rest. Hence, all societies, with minor variations, would end up creating liberal, democratic societies, giving emphasis to individual freedoms, as they moved up the socio-economic ladder. Today Asians can still see the plateau of contentment that most Western societies rest on; but they can also see, beyond the plateau, alternative peaks to which they can take their own societies. Instead of seeing the plateau as the natural end destination, there is a desire now to bypass it (for they do not wish to be afflicted by some of the social and cultural ills that afflict Western societies) and to search for alternative peaks beyond. This kind of mental horizon never existed in Asian minds until recently. It reveals their new confidence in themselves.

The third reason why we might answer "Yes" is that today is not the only period when Asian minds have begun to stir. As more and more Asians lift their lives up from levels of survival, they have the economic freedom to think, reflect, and rediscover their cultural heritage. There is a growing consciousness that their societies, like those in the West, have a rich social, cultural, and philosophical legacy that they can resuscitate and use to evolve their own modern and advanced societies. The richness and depth of Indian and Chinese civilizations, to name just two, have been acknowledged by Western scholars. Indeed, for the past few centuries, it was Western scholarship and endeavor that preserved the fruits of Asian civilization, just as the Arabs preserved and passed on Greek and Roman civilization in the darkest days of Europe. While Asian cultures deteriorated, the museums and universities in the West preserved and even cherished the best that Asian art and culture had produced. As Asians delve deeper into their own cultural heritage, they find their minds nourished. For the first time in centuries, an Asian renaissance is underway. Visitors to Asian cities—from Tehran to Calcutta, from Bombay to Shanghai, from Singapore to Hong Kong—will find now both a new-found confidence as well as an interest in traditional language and culture. As their economies grow and as they have more disposable income, Asians spend it increasingly on reviving traditional arts. What

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we are witnessing today is only the bare beginnings of a major cultural rediscovery. But the pride that Asians feel about their culture is clear and palpable.

In short, Asians who would like to rush and answer "Yes" to the question posed have more than ample justification to do so. But before they arrive at a final judgment, I would advise them to pause once more and reflect on the reasons for believing that, after all, "Maybe" is the right answer.

The "Maybe" Response

DESPITE THE TRAVAILS sparked by the financial crisis in late 1997, most Asians continue to be optimistic about their future. Such optimism is healthy. Yet it may be useful for Asians to learn a small lesson in history from the experience of Europeans exactly a century ago, when Europe was full of optimism. In his 1993 book *Out of Control*, Zbigniew Brzezinski described how the world looked then:

> The twentieth century was born in hope. It dawned in a relatively benign setting. The principal powers of the world had enjoyed, broadly speaking, a relatively prolonged spell of peace. . . . The dominant mood in the major capitals as of January 1, 1900 was generally one of optimism. The structure of global power seemed stable. Existing empires appeared to be increasingly enlightened as well as secure.

But despite this great hope, the twentieth century became, in Brzezinski's words,

> . . . mankind's most bloody and hateful century, a century of hallucinating politics and of monstrous killings. Cruelty was institutionalized to an unprecedented degree, lethality was organized on a mass production basis. The contrast between the scientific potential for good and the political evil that was actually unleashed is shocking. Never before in history was killing so globally pervasive, never before did it consume so many lives, never before was human annihilation pursued with such concentration of sustained effort on behalf of such arrogantly irrational goals.

One of the most important questions that an Asian has to ask himself today is a simple one: Can any Asian society, with the exception of Japan (which is an accepted member of the Western club), be absolutely confident that it can succeed and do as well in a comprehensive sense as contemporary advanced societies in North America and Western Europe have done? If the answer is that there is none, or even that there are only a few of whom that can be said, then the case for the "Maybe" response becomes stronger.

There are still many great challenges that Asian societies have to overcome before they can reach the comprehensive level of achievement enjoyed by Western societies. The first challenge in the development of any society is economic. Until the middle of 1997 most East Asian societies believed that they had mastered the basic rules of modern economics. They liberalized their economies, encouraged foreign investment flows, and practiced thrifty fiscal policies. The high level of domestic savings gave them a comfortable economic buffer. After enjoying continuous economic growth rates of 7 percent or more per annum for decades, it was natural for societies like South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia to assume that they had discovered the magical elixir of economic development.

The events following the devaluation of the Thai baht on July 2, 1997 demonstrated that they hadn't. The remarkable thing about this financial crisis was that no economist anticipated its depth or scale. Economists and analysts remain divided on its fundamental causes. As the crisis is still unfolding at the time of writing, it is too early to provide definitive judgments on those causes. But a few suggestions are worth making.

On the economic front, many mistakes were made. In Thailand, for example, the decision to sustain fixed exchange rates between the baht and the dollar, despite the

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disparity in interest rates, allowed Thai businessmen to borrow cheap in U.S. dollars and earn high interest rates in Thai baht. This also led to overinvestments in Thailand's property and share markets. All this was clearly unsustainable. The IMF provided some discreet warnings. However, the relatively weak coalition governments then prevailing in Thailand were unable to administer the bitter medicine required to remedy the situation, because some of it had to be administered to their financial backers. Domestically, it was a combination of economic and political factors that precipitated and prolonged the financial crisis.

There was also a huge new factor that complicated the story: the force of globalization. The key lesson that all East Asian economic managers have learned in the 1997-98 crisis is that they are accountable not only to domestic actors but to the international financial markets and their key players. The East Asians should not have been surprised. It was a logical consequence of liberalization and integration with the global economy. Integration has brought both benefits (in terms of significant increases in standards of living) and costs (such as loss of autonomy in economic management). But there was a clear reluctance to acknowledge and accept the loss of autonomy. This was demonstrated by the state of denial that characterized the initial East Asian response to this crisis, a denial that clearly showed the psychological time lag in East Asian minds in facing up to new realities.

Significantly, the two East Asian economies that have (after the initial bouts of denial) swallowed most fully the bitter medicine administered by the IMF are the two societies that have progressed faster in developing middle classes that have integrated themselves into the worldview of the new interconnected global universe of modern economics. South Korea and Thailand, although they continue to face serious economic challenges, have clearly demonstrated that their elites are now well plugged in to the new financial networks. The new finance minister of Thailand, Tarrin Nimmanhaeminda, walks and talks with ease in any key financial capital. His performance is one indicator of the new globalized Asian mind that is emerging.

The 1997-98 financial crisis also demonstrated the wisdom of the Chinese in translating the English word "crisis" as a combination of two Chinese characters, "danger" and "opportunity." Clearly, the East Asian societies have experienced many dangerous moments. But if they emerge from the 1997-98 financial crisis with restructured and reinvigorated economic and administrative systems of management, they may yet be among the first societies in the world to develop strong immune systems to handle present and future challenges springing from globalization. It's too early to tell whether this is true. And this in turn reinforces the point that on the economic front, one should perhaps give the "Maybe" answer.

Second, on the political front most Asian societies, including East Asian societies, have a long way to go before they can reach Western levels of political stability and harmony. There is little danger of a coup d'état or real civil war in most contemporary Western societies (with the possible exception, still, of Northern Ireland). Western societies have adopted political variations of the liberal democratic model, even though the presidential systems of the United States and France differ significantly from the Westminster models of the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. These political forms are not perfect. They contain many features that inhibit social progress, from vested interest lobby groups to pork barrel politics. Indeed, it would be fair to say that political development in most Western societies has atrophied. But it has nevertheless atrophied at comfortable levels. Most of their citizens live in domestic security, fear no oppression, and are content with their political frameworks. How many Asian societies can claim to share this benign state of affairs? The answer, clearly, is very few. And if it is equally clear that they are *not* going to enjoy this in the very near future, then this again militates in favor of the "Maybe" answer.

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Third, in the security realm, the one great advantage Western societies have over the rest of the world is that war among them has become a thing of the past. The reasons for this are complex. It includes an awareness of ethnic affinity among Western tribes who feel outnumbered by the rest of the world's population and also a sense of belonging to a common civilization. It may also reflect the exhaustion of having fought too many wars in the past. Nevertheless it is truly remarkable, when we count the number of wars—and truly big wars—that the British, French, and Germans have fought with each other (including two in this century), that there is today almost a zero chance of war between their countries. This is a remarkably civilized thing to have achieved, reflecting a considerable step forward in the history of human affairs. When will India and Pakistan, or North and South Korea, achieve this same zero prospect of war? And if the answer is not in the near future, is it reasonable to suggest that perhaps Asian minds (or the minds of Asian societies) have not reached the same level as the West?

Fourth, Asians face serious challenges in the social realm. While it is true that it took the social dislocations caused by the Industrial Revolution to eradicate the feudal traces of European cultures (social freedom followed economic freedom), it is still unclear whether similar economic revolutions in East Asia will have the same liberating social effects on Asian societies. Unfortunately, many feudal traces, especially those of clannishness and nepotism, continue to prevent Asian societies from becoming truly meritocratic, where individual citizens are able to grow and thrive on the basis of their abilities and not on the basis of their birth or connections or ethnic background.

Fifth and finally, and perhaps most fundamentally, the key question remains whether Asian minds will be able to develop the right blend of values that will both preserve some of the traditional strengths of Asian values (e.g., attachment to the family as an institution, deference to societal interests, thrift, conservatism in social mores, respect for authority) and absorb the strength of Western values (the emphasis on individual achievement, political and economic freedom, respect for the rule of law as well as for key national institutions). This will be a complex challenge.

ONE OF THE EARLY (and perhaps inevitable) reactions by some Western commentators to the 1997-98 financial crisis was to suggest that it fundamentally reflected the failure of Asian values. If nothing else, this quick reaction suggested that the "Asian values" debate of the early 1990s had touched on some sensitive nerves in the Western mind and soul. The desire to bury Asian values revealed the real pain that had been inflicted during that debate.

The true test of the viability and validity of values is not shown in theory but in practice. Those who try to draw a direct causal link between adherence to Asian values and financial disaster have a tough empirical case to make, given the varied reactions of East Asian societies to the financial crisis. South Korea and Thailand, two of the three countries that were most deeply affected by the crisis (i.e., those who had to turn to the IMF for assistance), had been given the highest marks by the West for their moves toward democratization. The three open economies least affected by the financial crisis, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, have very different political systems. In short, there was no clear correlation between political systems and financial vulnerability.

The only correlation that is clear so far is that between good governance and resilience in the financial crisis. Good governance is not associated with any single political system or ideology. It is associated with the willingness and ability of the government to develop economic, social, and administrative systems that are resilient enough to handle the challenges brought about in the new economic era into which we are moving. China provides a good living example of this. Its leaders are not looking for the perfect political system in the-

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ory. They are searching daily for pragmatic solutions to keep their society moving forward. The population supports this pragmatism, for they too feel that it is time for China to catch up. Traditionally, the Chinese have looked for good government, not minimal government. They can recognize good governance when they experience it. The fact that Japan—which is in Western eyes the most liberal and democratic East Asian society—has had great difficulties adapting to the new economic environment demonstrates that political openness is not the key variable to look at.

It is vital for Western minds to understand that the efforts by Asians to rediscover Asian values are not only or even primarily a search for political values. Instead, they represent a complex set of motives and aspirations in Asian minds: a desire to reconnect with their historical past after this connection had been ruptured both by colonial rule and the subsequent domination of the globe by a Western *Weltanschauung*; an effort to find the right balance in bringing up their young so that they are open to the new technologically interconnected global universe and yet rooted in and conscious of the cultures of their ancestors; an effort to define their own personal, social, and national identities in a way that enhances their sense of self-esteem in a world in which their immediate ancestors had subconsciously accepted the fact that they were lesser beings in a Western universe. In short, the reassertion of Asian values in the 1990s represents a complex process of regeneration and rediscovery that is an inevitable aspect of the rebirth of societies.

Here again, it is far too early to tell whether Asian societies can successfully both integrate themselves into the modern world and reconnect with their past. Both are mammoth challenges. Western minds have a clear advantage over Asian minds, as they are convinced that their successful leap into modernity was to a large extent a result of the compatibility of their value systems with the modern universe. Indeed, many Western minds believe (consciously or subconsciously) that without Western value systems no society can truly enter the modern universe.

Only time will tell whether Asian societies can enter that universe as Asian societies rather than Western replicas. Since it is far too early to pass judgment on whether they will succeed in this effort, it is perhaps fair to suggest that this too is another argument in favor of the "Maybe" answer to the question "Can Asians think?"

Clearly, the twenty-first century and the next millennium will prove to be very challenging for Asian societies. For most of the past five hundred years, they have fallen behind European societies in many different ways. There is a strong desire to catch up. The real answer to our question will be provided if and when they do so. Until then, Asians should constantly remind themselves why this question remains a valid one for them to ponder. Only they can answer it. No one else can. □

How To Take On Serious New Commitments

The process of [NATO] enlargement is ongoing. No one's going to be excluded on the basis of geography or history. And there's no reason why the second round should be any more difficult or controversial than the first. In fact, it should be easier.

— Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott
Washington Post, May 4, 1998

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Religion and American Foreign Policy

The Story of a Complex Relationship

Leo Ribuffo

CONGRESSIONAL consideration of the Freedom from Religious Persecution bill introduced by Representative Frank Wolf and Senator Arlen Specter has precipitated a small-scale debate about a little-studied subject: the connection between American religion and foreign relations. If passed, the Wolf-Specter bill will establish an office in the State Department to monitor religious persecution and withdraw "non-humanitarian" aid from countries that fail to meet our standards.[1] Even in the absence of such an office, many Americans have always been concerned about religious freedom abroad and the State Department has intermittently protested persecution since the early days of the republic. The debate on the bill would be enhanced by a historical perspective.

The historical connection between American religion and foreign relations may be explored on four levels. First, to what extent and in what ways have religious beliefs contributed to the widely shared but amorphous assumption that the United States is an exceptional nation with a unique role in the world? Second, to what extent have religious "interest groups" at home and religious issues abroad influenced government foreign policies? Third, to what extent and in what ways have serious religious ideas—including esoteric theological doctrines—affected those interest groups, as well as important international relations theorists and policymakers? Finally, to what extent have foreign involvements affected the domestic religious scene?

Not the least of our conceptual problems is that everyone involved in the contemporary "culture war" homogenizes this country's religious history in one way or another. Whereas the Left tends to view white Protestants as an undifferentiated mass, the center and Right optimistically postulate an ecumenical "Judeo-Christian tradition." That term itself only began to enter our lexicon in the 1940s, when many citizens still routinely referred to "Christian Americanism" or even "Protestant Americanism." Similarly, the label "fundamentalist", now applied promiscuously to groups from Tulsa to Tehran, was coined by a Baptist editor in 1920 to describe *one branch* of theologically conservative Protestantism.[2]

ALTHOUGH TWO recent presidents, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, liked to underscore American uniqueness by citing Puritan John Winthrop's admonition to build a "city upon a hill", the relationship between Reformation-era Protestantism and the American sense of mission has never been simple.[3] Almost all white residents of the thirteen colonies on the eve of independence thought Protestantism superior

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to Catholicism. Even so, Congregationalists and Quakers defined their respective worldly missions very differently. The large German pietist population paid slight attention to inspiring the wider world. Instead of salvation, a small Enlightenment elite spoke of "virtue" in an idiom both cosmopolitan and classical. Especially in these circles, there were doubts as well as hopes concerning the success of the American experiment in republican government. Perhaps most important, from the outset some Americans defined their country's international mission as that of leading the world by moral example, while others favored direct intervention to spread virtuous American ways.

The actions of what we now call religious interest groups can be deemed legitimate by reason of longevity. They were involved in the first and foremost foreign policy decision, whether or not to create an independent country. The rebellious colonists seriously though mistakenly believed that the British planned to reduce them to "slavery", and one sure sign of this for Congregationalists and Presbyterians was the lingering threat of a resident Anglican bishop. From the Quebec Act of 1774, which granted special privileges to French Canadian Catholics, the heirs to Puritanism and the first Great Awakening inferred that the tyrannical Crown was consorting with tyrannical popery. Quakers and Mennonites who refused to serve in the army were subject to fines, confiscation of property, and imprisonment.[4] At the same time, most of the 25,000 Catholics in the thirteen colonies supported independence because they thought, quite rightly as things turned out, that the new republic would grant them greater rights.

The victorious revolutionary coalition began to crack almost immediately. Some of the fissures occurred along religious lines. An incongruous alliance of deists and dissident Protestants ensured that there would be no religious test for federal office and began the process of disestablishing state churches (a process that continued until the 1830s). By the 1790s, no more than 10 percent of the population formally belonged to churches.[5]

Disagreements about both religion and foreign affairs shaped the first party system in the 1790s. The Jeffersonian Republicans, the ancestors of the Democrats, were religiously more diverse, tolerant, and (in terms of government policy) neutral than the Federalists. These sins were compounded by the Jeffersonian tilt toward revolutionary France and against Great Britain, a country the Federalists admired for attempting to spread pure—that is, Protestant—Christianity around the world. These issues came to a head when the United States and Britain went to war in 1812.

The causes of the war, which are still hard to rank in order of importance, were essentially secular and psychological: free trade in wartime, British impressment of American sailors, and a craving for territory in the West. Once the conflict began, however, rival religious factions offered their own distinctive interpretations of events. Federalist Congregationalists and Presbyterians reiterated their admiration for British Protestantism, damned Napoleon as an autocratic ally of Pope Pius VI, and characterized impressed sailors as runaway Irish Catholics unworthy of sympathy. Even President James Madison's proclamations of national fast days were deemed theologically deficient because he recommended but did not require participation. Pro-war Baptists and Methodists denounced the autocratic Church of England, hailed Madison as a friend of religious liberty, and noted that the Pope was allied with Britain and imprisoned by Napoleon. Although no Protestant spoke well of the Pope, there were few denunciations of American Catholics, in part because they already served disproportionately in the armed forces.[6]

These political and religious battles occurred within a larger consensus of opinion that the United States should expand its territory, trade, and power. In his patriotic *American Geography*, published in 1789, Rev. Jedidiah Morse looked forward to the "largest empire that ever existed [including] millions

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of souls . . . West of the Mississippi." Even before that, Rev. Ezra Stiles said in 1783 that the *example* of the United States would spread the "empire of reason" and thus hasten the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. George Washington, less conventionally devout than these Congregationalists, had the precedent of ancient Rome in mind when he predicted that the American "infant empire" would soon grow and mature.[7]

Manifest Destiny

ALTHOUGH THE WAR of 1812 ended in a draw, and the British burning of the White House might have given pause, Americans came out of the conflict with a heightened sense of mission. Between 1810 and the 1850s, most wanted to expand the country's boundaries. With the exception of Quakers, Mennonites, and some Unitarians, they expressed few qualms about using force to do so.

The Democratic publisher and diplomat John O'Sullivan caught the prevailing mood when he coined a famous phrase in 1845. The American claim to Oregon was "by right of our manifest destiny to overspread and possess the whole of the continent which Providence has given us for the great experiment of liberative and federative self-government entrusted to us." "Manifest destiny" coincided with a second Great Awakening that energized Protestantism, precipitated numerous theological disputes, and produced new faiths such as Seventh-Day Adventism and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Yet theology per se had slight impact on the expansionist consensus. As O'Sullivan's declaration suggests, the rhetoric of manifest destiny exuded more Enlightenment republicanism than sectarianism. Claims to the continent were based on what historian Norman Graebner calls "geographic predestination." Within the expansionist consensus, debate centered on geopolitical and racial questions. Did the Rocky Mountains or the Pacific Ocean represent the "natural limits" of the United States? Would the great bay at San Francisco facilitate trade with Asia? Would Canada ultimately throw off British "slavery" and join the United States? Could the republic absorb the "mongrel race" of Mexicans? And most important, would the new territory be slave or free soil?[8]

Yet religious concerns related to foreign policy remained. In addition to the second Great Awakening, the pre-Civil War expansion coincided with a surge of non-Protestant immigration, a strong nativist response, and the creation of a second party system that arrayed Jacksonian Democrats against the culturally more conservative Whigs. In this context, Democratic expansionists attributed manifest destiny to an ecumenical Providence partly because the bulk of Catholic and Jewish immigrants supported their party. On the other hand, the prominent Whig nativist, Rev. Lyman Beecher, issued a famous "plea" to save the American West from the "slavery and debasement" of Catholicism. Despite nativist fears that they would aid the papist enemy, Catholic soldiers, including at least two generals, helped to defeat Mexico in the 1840s. Democratic President Franklin Pierce considered establishing diplomatic relations with the Papal States. Unfortunately, Archbishop Gaetano Bedini, sent by the Pope to discuss the issue, was driven from the country by mobs in 1854; some of his assailants were nativists, but many others were anticlerical immigrants who resented Bedini's role in suppressing the Italian republican movement in 1848.[9]

As the population became religiously more diverse, so too did diplomatic personnel, foreign policy issues, and domestic political pressures. Mordecai Noah, a Jew, began his long political career in 1813 as consul in Tunis, where he negotiated the release of several Americans held captive. In 1840 the United States joined European governments in protesting the imprisonment of Syrian Jews for allegedly committing a ritual murder. Ten years later, a commercial treaty with Switzerland conceded the right of individual cantons to exclude Jews, and in at least one

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instance an American Jewish merchant was expelled. After American Jews protested, with support from such prominent gentiles as Henry Clay and Lewis Cass, the Fillmore administration renegotiated the treaty. But the changes were cosmetic, and both protests and quiet diplomacy continued until Switzerland adopted a new constitution in 1874.[10]

The imbroglio over the Swiss treaty provides an early illustration of the complicated religious alliances and animosities that persisted despite the widely shared belief that the United States was an exceptional nation with a unique role in the world. Many Protestants supported the Jewish protests not only because they valued the republican principle of equal treatment for all white Americans, but also because they wanted to set a precedent for receiving equal treatment in Catholic countries. Conversely, Catholic Archbishop John Hughes ridiculed the notion that sovereign states should change their policies whenever a U.S. citizen arrived "with a full measure of American atmosphere, American sunbeams, and American religion."

Catholics and Jews also clashed over the Mortara affair in the late 1850s. Edgaro Mortara, a Jewish child in Bologna, was secretly baptized by a servant and then removed from his family by the Church on the grounds that since Mortara was now a Catholic, he should not be raised by Jews. Protests against the Church's action were widespread in Europe and the United States, but President James Buchanan, caught between Catholic and Jewish constituents, refused to join them. It was "neither the right nor the duty" of the American government, claimed Buchanan, to "express a moral censorship over the conduct of other independent governments, and to rebuke them for acts which we may deem arbitrary and unjust towards their own citizens or subjects."[11]

The most significant intersection between religion and foreign relations in the nineteenth century was the extraordinary burst of Protestant missionary activity initially spurred by the second Great Awakening. Indeed, some missionaries became what we would now call lobbyists and their "interest group" often allied with less devout expansionists. On this continent, they promoted the settlement of Oregon and urged President James K. Polk to stand firm against British claims. The most important missionary activities, however, occurred across the Pacific, where conversion, commerce, condescension, and promotion of Protestant American values usually went hand in hand. Charles Denby, an American diplomat in China, called them "pioneers of trade and commerce." Horace Allen, who arrived in Korea as a Presbyterian medical missionary, later became the U.S. government representative, actively promoted American investment, and established himself as the most influential foreigner in the country. In Hawaii, however, missionaries were criticized for warning the king about sharp American business practices.[12]

Unitarians questioned the propriety of converting any country from its ancient religion. When a treaty signed in 1858, which had been composed in part by missionaries, protected the religious activities of Protestants and Catholics in China (including Chinese believers), some Jewish leaders also protested that Christianity was being written into the law of the land.[13]

The religious disorder of the late nineteenth century was no less consequential in its sphere than the better remembered social upheaval. Sometimes social and religious issues were intimately related, as in the case of a large "new immigration" of Catholics and Jews from Eastern and Southern Europe. Protestants not only confronted these immigrants, but they also faced the intellectual challenges of Darwinism and biblical "higher criticism." Some responded by becoming theological liberals; they accepted evolution, denied original sin, doubted biblical miracles, and emphasized Jesus' ethical teachings. A minority of these theological liberals also became advocates of a politically liberal or radical social gospel. New faiths emerged, notably Christian Science, several Pentecostal

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Protestant groups, and the International Bible Students' Association (known as Jehovah's Witnesses since the early 1930s).[14]

Not surprisingly amid this turmoil, the election of 1896 produced the most devout pair of presidential nominees in American history, William Jennings Bryan and William McKinley. Nor is it surprising that the amalgam of ideas sanctioning the next phase of "manifest destiny" (a phrase President McKinley still used) contained a larger religious component than its pre-Civil War counterpart. Congregationalist minister Josiah Strong became a major ideologist of expansion with the publication of *Our Country* in 1886. Mixing geographic determinism, missionary zeal, and a sense of "Anglo-Saxon" superiority, Strong concluded that the United States would be the "elect nation for the age to come"—but only if non-Protestant immigrants were successfully Americanized. For most expansionists new concerns seemed at least as pressing as the old sense of mission. They sought foreign markets as a solution to the depression of the 1890s, cheered military adventure as an antidote to national softness, and argued that the "closed" frontier would produce a domestic social explosion unless energies were diverted abroad.[15]

Onto a Larger Stage

THE MOST DRAMATIC foreign policy event of the late nineteenth century, the Spanish-American War, was rooted in sympathy for Cuban rebels fighting for independence. Attempting to achieve that goal without war, McKinley half-heartedly pursued papal mediation and used Archbishop John Ireland as an intermediary with the Vatican. Most Catholic spokesmen favored this approach and criticized "bloodthirsty" Protestants for demanding quick military action. No Protestant denomination showed greater enthusiasm for war than McKinley's own, the Methodist Episcopal Church. Intervention in Cuba, McKinley finally told Congress in April 1898, would fulfill American aspirations as a "Christian, peace-loving people." In subsequent proclamations, he thanked the "Divine Master" for granting victory with few casualties.[16]

Debate about the peace treaty centered on the acquisition of the Philippines. In a famous interview with Methodist leaders, McKinley said that after prayer and reflection, he had concluded that the United States must "uplift and civilize and Christianize [the Filipinos], and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died." The debate about ratification turned on secular issues: the propriety of a republican empire, the threat posed by a nonwhite colony, and the perennial dream of the great China market. Most Quakers and Unitarians opposed acquisition, but Catholic bishops and Protestant social gospelers, like the country at large, were divided. The prospect of a new missionary field influenced some proponents of the treaty.[17]

An empire in Asia proved more troublesome than anticipated. The squalid little war to suppress the Filipino independence movement kept alive secular and religious opposition to annexation. Meanwhile, religious groups carried their American conflicts to the Philippines. While Protestants assailed "greedy friars" with large land holdings, Catholics complained about desecration of Church property and pointed out that most Filipinos were already Christians. Meanwhile, in the face of rising nationalist opposition and grassroots assaults, missionaries extended their enterprise into the Chinese interior and became increasingly involved in Chinese affairs; the United States ultimately joined in Western gunboat diplomacy to protect them. In the worst confrontation, the Boxers highlighted their animosity to foreign influence by killing almost two hundred missionaries and thousands of Chinese Christians.[18]

The foremost presidents of the Progressive era, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, were more complicated than can be inferred from their place in international relations courses as exemplars,

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respectively, of "realism" and "idealism." Roosevelt expounded often on "righteousness", and his eagerness to enter World War I was hardly based on a sober evaluation of reality. A pro forma member of the Dutch Reformed Church, who may have doubted the existence of God and an afterlife, T.R. showed that a strong sense of American mission needed no theological underpinning. On the other hand—and H.L. Mencken, President Victoriano Huerta of Mexico, and countless scholars to the contrary—Wilson is not usefully interpreted as a latter-day Puritan. A theologically liberal Presbyterian like his minister father, he paid scant attention to doctrinal disputes, easily accepted evolution and higher criticism, and almost never discerned God acting directly in history (Wilson's explanation of his own election was an exception to this generalization). Certainly theology did not shape Wilson's version of the venerable belief that the United States was an exceptional nation with a unique role in the world.[19]

Although less enthusiastic than Roosevelt about the military ethic as an antidote to national softness, Wilson proved no less willing to use force abroad. Despite these similarities, however, their successors in the White House are more aptly called Wilsonians than Rooseveltians. From Washington's baptism of an "infant empire" to T.R.'s celebration of the onward march of civilization, presidents had often spoken candidly about pursuing American interests at the cost of somebody else's. After Wilson, they were much more likely to stress that what was good for the United States was also good for the rest of the world.

Although the third president of the Progressive era, William Howard Taft, is rarely cited as an exemplar of anything other than girth, his administration was marked by perhaps the most successful instance of lobbying by a religious interest group in U.S. history. A grassroots campaign, conceived by prominent Jews, forced the abrogation of a commercial treaty with Imperial Russia in 1912. This campaign capped a long series of protests against the tsarist regime for discriminating against American Jews and persecuting Russian Jews. For seven decades anti-Semites have cited this abrogation as evidence of a powerful "international Zionist conspiracy." Yet in fact Taft could be prodded into action only because the issue intersected with broad American republican principles. Consequently, Jewish protesters were able to win support from influential Christian clergy, publishers, and politicians.[20]

When the First World War began in 1914, both the American President, Woodrow Wilson, and his secretary of state, William Jennings Bryan, were Presbyterians convinced that the United States had a special mission in the world. Their divergent responses illustrate the inadequacy of glib generalizations about the connection between religious dispositions and specific foreign policies. Although susceptible to intermittent military enthusiasms, Bryan regarded the pursuit of international peace as his Christian duty. He negotiated more than two dozen "cooling off" treaties, and commemorated some of them by having swords melted down and recast as tiny plowshares. Bryan resigned in 1915 because he thought Wilson was forsaking neutrality. But he also placed his resignation in a broader context. The United States had always "sought to aid the world by example", he said. Participation in European power politics would represent "descent" from this morally superior position. "Our mission is to implant hope in the breast of humanity and substitute higher ideals for the ideals which have led nations into armed conflicts."[21]

Bryan supported the war effort after American entry but a substantial minority of Americans did not. Among religious dissidents, Quakers and Mennonites received better treatment than the more adamant and less familiar Jehovah's Witnesses, who typically went to jail. On the other hand, evangelist Billy Sunday hailed American soldiers as "God's grenadiers." Amid a sordid debate about the bayonet's legitimacy as a Christian weapon, Unitarian Albert Dieffenbach

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affirmed that Jesus himself would use it against the Germans. Not everyone spoke so zealously. Yet even prominent clergy who had opposed intervention before 1917, including Rabbi Stephen Wise and Rev. John R. Mott, rallied to the cause. The major denominations organized to provide services for their men in uniform. Under the leadership of James Cardinal Gibbons, an interfaith League of National Unity promoted the war across denominational lines.[22]

Even among supporters of the war, however, there was more disagreement than ecumenicism. When Pope Benedict XV offered a peace plan in mid-1917, Protestants thought the proposal too "Austrian"; though more favorably inclined, the Catholic hierarchy nonetheless recognized the futility of urging the plan on President Wilson. Ultimately religion influenced the war effort less than the war affected the domestic religious scene. Adding denunciations of German-American brewers to their stock arguments, Protestants secured the enactment of Prohibition in the face of Catholic and Jewish opposition. Some theological conservatives, attuned to a form of Bible prophecy called premillennial dispensationalism, interpreted the British promise of a Jewish homeland in Palestine as evidence of Jesus' imminent return.[23]

Between the Wars

ABOVE ALL, the high emotions generated by the war turned the nation's cultural splits into chasms. Accordingly, as the United States entered the 1920s, not only were Protestants increasingly arrayed against Catholics, but also Protestant theological liberals and conservatives were increasingly arrayed against each other. Yet no more than businessmen or bohemian intellectuals were religious leaders "isolationist." Missionary agencies saw the rising tide of Chinese nationalism and, partly as a means of self-defense, most responded by urging the United States to surrender extraterritoriality and special protection for Christians. Prominent Catholics, and to a lesser extent Protestants, shared the widespread enthusiasm for Benito Mussolini. While Catholics credited Il Duce with Italy's "resurrection", Protestants appreciated his anticlericalism. The Mussolini vogue simultaneously highlights both the persistent belief in American exceptionalism and the restraints this belief imposes on Wilsonian aspirations to reform the rest of the world. Although inappropriate for the United States, "Mussolini methods" suited Italians, *Commonweal* editorialized. Meanwhile, fundamentalists studied Scripture and world affairs to determine whether or not Mussolini was the Antichrist predicted in the Book of Revelation.[24]

The Soviet Union attracted at least as much attention as Mussolini's Italy during the 1920s. The regime was denounced all along the religious spectrum for promoting atheism and murdering believers. Even so, a significant minority of Protestant theological liberals expressed cautious interest in the "Soviet experiment." Interest grew and caution diminished after the Crash. In the mid-1930s, some social gospelers actively participated in the Popular Front.[25]

What is usually mischaracterized as interwar isolationism was the pervasive belief that the United States must remain aloof from any European war. With varying degrees of sophistication, scholars, pundits, and public figures attributed entry into World War I to economic entanglement with the Allies, machinations by arms manufacturers, and British propaganda. The diverse peace movement that developed in this context contained a large religious element, including many clergy. Some of these activists were full-fledged pacifists, such as the members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), War Resisters League, and Catholic Worker group. Yet many more simply regretted "presenting arms" in 1917-18.[26]

From the outset, foreign policy issues related to religion threatened Franklin D. Roosevelt's eclectic coalition. In 1933, Roosevelt tried to minimize opposition to recognition of the Soviet Union by charming

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prominent anti-communists (including the legendary Father Edmund Walsh of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service) and extracting a Soviet promise to respect the religious freedom of resident Americans. The next year, Catholic criticism precipitated the first major test of the Good Neighbor Policy. The Mexican government's insistence on breaking the political and economic power of the Church sometimes went beyond anticlericalism to outright persecution. In 1934, when Ambassador Josephus Daniels praised the creation of secular schools, American bishops charged the Roosevelt administration with indifference to the plight of Mexican Catholics, 10,000 letters to the State Department echoed the same theme, and 250 members of Congress requested an investigation. While FDR quietly urged the Mexicans to moderate their anticlericalism, the Democratic Party pointedly urged Ambassador Daniels to stay out of the United States during the 1936 campaign.[27]

When the Spanish Civil War erupted that same year, Congress passed (with one dissenting vote) a ban on arms sales to the Republic. The action was unusual in that recognized governments were traditionally allowed to buy weapons in the midst of insurrections. Roosevelt signed the bill primarily because he wanted to coordinate policy with the British and French, feared the spread of war beyond Spain, and at this point shared the anti-interventionist sentiments of his fellow citizens. Nevertheless, the administration derailed efforts to lift the arms embargo even after FDR edged toward a policy of quarantining international aggressors. The President's perception of Catholic opinion was an important though not necessarily decisive factor. According to a Gallup poll in late 1938, 42 percent of Catholics favored the Republic while 58 percent supported General Francisco Franco's rebels. Yet Catholic clergy at all levels were virtually unanimous in hailing Franco as the savior of a Spain that had been Sovietized, and, frequently, as the Spanish George Washington. Most Protestants disagreed, and the resulting conflicts were sometimes vehement. When 150 prominent Protestants signed an open letter criticizing the Spanish Church for supporting Franco, Catholic leaders accused them of fostering a "species of religious war" in the United States.[28]

The acrimonious debate in 1939-41 about aiding the nations fighting Germany centered on three questions. Noninterventionists doubted the ability of these countries to hold out, expected un-neutral acts to draw the United States into the conflict, and warned that any war to save or spread freedom abroad would destroy freedom at home. Roosevelt had faith in the military capacity of the British and the Soviets, believed that an Axis victory would threaten freedom everywhere, and was willing to risk war. These divergent analyses were rarely discussed dispassionately. Indeed, the whole debate was wrapped up in ideological, ethnic, and religious loyalties and animosities.

In Roosevelt's view, religious freedom was one aspect of civilization under threat. In January 1939 he declared, "The defense of religion, of democracy, and of good faith among nations is all the same fight." He also understood the political potency of religious references. In October 1941, justifying further expansion of the undeclared naval war against German submarines, Roosevelt denounced the alleged Nazi plan "to abolish all existing religions—Catholic, Protestant, Mohammedan, Hindu, Buddhist, and Jewish alike."[29]

As in previous crises, the relationship between faith and foreign policy remained complicated in the country at large. Catholics were less interventionist than Protestants. Many Irish- and German-American Catholics viewed Britain skeptically, some Italian-Americans still admired Mussolini, and all Catholics loathed the prospect of a de facto alliance with the Soviets. At the same time, few Catholics were pacifists in principle. Episcopalians tended to rally behind Great Britain but there were numerous exceptions, including young Gerald Ford, an early supporter of the America First Committee. The

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anti-interventionist camp included both social gospelers at *Christian Century* and the anti-Semitic fundamentalists of the old Christian right. The clearest trend was the reduction of pacifist ranks to a devout remnant. Among the defectors, "Christian realist" theologian Reinhold Niebuhr moved from the chairmanship of FOR in the early 1930s to advocacy of war against Nazi Germany in 1941.[30]

War and Revival

AFTER PEARL HARBOR, FDR continued to ask God's blessings on the war effort. Most denominations rallied to the cause, though less zealously than during the First World War. Despite their wariness of internationalism, Catholics again served disproportionately in the armed services. In addition, they remained aloof from the widespread but evanescent enthusiasm for the Soviet Union. The pro-Soviet vogue owed less to agitation by radical social gospelers than to a popular inclination to think well of an ally, as well as to continuing doubts about the likelihood of perfecting foreigners. According to a wartime poll, 46 percent of Americans thought the Soviet Union had a government "as good as she could have for her people." In portrayals of the enemy, the Japanese seemed less human than the Germans, not only because they were Asians but also because Shintoism and emperor worship looked pagan.[31]

Probably no foreign policy issue associated with religion has produced greater controversy than the question of whether more European Jews could have been saved from the Holocaust. American Jews denounced the Nazi regime immediately after Hitler came to power, and then sought government action as reports of genocide reached the United States in 1942 and 1943. As on many previous occasions, they enlisted non-Jewish allies and appealed to generic American values. These appeals fell flat during the 1930s, however, when anti-Semitism was widespread and even tolerant Americans feared losing their jobs to refugees. U.S. entry into the war focused attention on the threat to American lives. The Roosevelt administration took no effective action to aid European Jewry until the War Refugee Board was created in January 1944.[32]

The retrospective judgment that little more could have been done is simply wrong, and those who make it often rest their case on a narrow strategic determinism. Supposedly, policymakers subordinated all such "secondary" issues to the greater good of beating the Axis as quickly as possible. In fact, the United States engaged in numerous actions of dubious military merit in order to achieve non-military ends. For example, the Doolittle bombing raid on Japan was carried out to raise American morale, the invasion of North Africa conciliated the British, and the Philippines-centered strategy in the Pacific fulfilled a popular general's pledge to return. If the fate of European Jewry had elicited comparable concern, more denunciations of the "final solution" would have been forthcoming from officials, more ransom would have been paid in wavering German satellites, and more military ingenuity would have been devoted to disrupting the Holocaust.

Among the many extraordinary changes brought by the war, two stand out for any consideration of religion and foreign relations. First, with "isolationism" thoroughly discredited, debate about the postwar world centered on the *kind* of internationalism the United States should pursue. Prominent internationalists ranged from publisher Henry Luce—the son of missionaries in China, who envisioned an "American century"—to former Vice President Henry A. Wallace—an unconventional social gospeler and early Cold War dove, who promoted a "century of the common man."[33]

Second, the war sparked a religious revival that was to affect significantly the style of the Cold War at home and abroad. Among theologically conservative Protestants, there was renewed interest in foreign missions. Christian Cold War realist Niebuhr became, in the judgment of historian Walter LaFeber, the most influential American theologian

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since Jonathan Edwards. George F. Kennan, the conceptualizer of containment, saw himself as a Niebuhrian. Dwight Eisenhower echoed millions of Americans in his repudiation of "Godless Communism." Eisenhower's dour Presbyterian secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, seemed to personify the Cold War as an unambiguous struggle between good and evil.[34]

Interests, not Ideas

NEVERTHELESS, the "fifth great awakening" barely affected the *substance* of the Cold War. This generalization certainly holds true for the impact of Christian realist theology. The sense of tragedy and irony intrinsic to Protestant neo-orthodoxy is compatible with a wide variety of positions on specific diplomatic issues. During their long careers, Niebuhr and Kennan seem to have taken most of them. By the early 1950s, Kennan was complaining that his theory of containment had been misconstrued, and Niebuhr was denying that the Cold War could be reduced to a conflict "between a god-fearing and a godless civilization." Dulles, like the President he had served at the Versailles conference and his own minister father, was a theological liberal. After regaining his faith in the late 1930s, he seems to have felt a heightened sense of American mission. But his definition of that mission changed significantly during the next two decades. Dulles was in turn a noninterventionist, bipartisan internationalist, partisan proponent of "liberation", and more flexible secretary of state in private than he appeared in public.[35]

Not religious ideas but religious interest groups helped to shape the early Cold War. As communists advanced in China, some missionaries advocated assistance to Chiang Kai-shek in the vain hope of winning a military victory, while others edged away from Chiang in the vain hope of establishing decent relations with Mao Tse-tung. Among missionaries who became major public figures, Representative Walter Judd, a leader of the congressional China bloc, held the former position, while J. Leighton Stuart, the U.S. ambassador to the last nationalist government on the mainland, held the latter. As Eastern Europe fell under Soviet control, Catholics took the lead in highlighting the suppression of religion and abuse of priests. During the late 1950s, the American hierarchy depicted President Ngo Dinh Diem of the Republic of Vietnam as a Catholic hero. Truth mixed with hyperbole in Clark Clifford's advice to Harry Truman that anti-communism was the decisive factor in the Catholic vote.[36]

The quick de facto recognition accorded to Israel in 1948 represented a victory for one of the great grassroots lobbying efforts in American history. President Truman took this action in the face of opposition from his senior diplomatic and military advisers—as well as from oil companies and some prominent Reform Jews. Certainly he would not have moved so quickly if few Jews had been registered to vote. Yet Truman also acted to minimize Soviet influence in Israel. Moreover, in this instance, Zionists were able to find powerful Christian allies. Not only was there widespread sympathy for victims of Nazism, but also nativists sometimes supported Zionism because they feared that, in the absence of the creation of a state, these victims might come to the United States. To many fundamentalists, the "regathering" of Jews in the Holy Land fulfilled dispensationalist Bible prophecy. Although no group worked harder to infer God's will from the Bible itself, fundamentalists were not immune to world events. In the wake of the Holocaust, they began to reinterpret Scripture in philo-Semitic fashion and concluded that the regathering of Jews did not advance the interests of the Antichrist.[37]

The consensus on foreign policy and the level of religious comity during the 1950s should not be exaggerated. Although anti-Semitism steadily declined, tensions rose between Catholics and Protestants, and the Cold War was one of the reasons. Unlike Protestant social gospelers, virtually no practic-

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ing Catholics had drifted into the Popular Front or avidly celebrated the Soviet Union. According to a joke often attributed to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, during this period Fordham graduates in the FBI investigated Harvard graduates in the State Department. Many Catholics, including the formidable Francis Cardinal Spellman, pointedly asked why their patriotism went unappreciated by the Protestant elite. The answer, some members of the Protestant elite responded, was that Catholic patriotism was too crude, and they cited Senator Joseph McCarthy as a case in point. In the long run, however, both World War II and the Cold War served Catholic interests well. Without PT 109 and the post-Sputnik fear of falling behind the Soviets, John F. Kennedy would have lost to Richard Nixon in 1960.[38]

OPPOSITION TO the Vietnam War contained a large religious component. Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam (CALCAV), an interdenominational network of doves, was founded in late 1965. Protestant theological conservatives were typically more hawkish than theological liberals. Some evangelical hawks pointed to Indochina as a fertile field for missionaries. Pacifists working in obscurity since Pearl Harbor re-emerged as national figures. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Senator George McGovern found sanction for antiwar activism in their own versions of the social gospel. Making his latest foreign policy turn within the framework of neo-orthodoxy, Niebuhr praised the "heroic" divinity students who burned their draft cards. None of this was surprising.[39]

What was surprising—indeed, what would have been virtually inconceivable fifteen years earlier—was significant Catholic opposition to a war against communism. From 1966 onward, the bishops grew steadily more critical of the Vietnam conflict, and in 1972 they endorsed amnesty for draft evaders. Clerical and lay participants in nonviolent resistance attracted national attention and some served prison terms. As Garry Wills noted, the Church now produced both FBI agents *and* radical priests—occasionally in the same families. Polls in the late 1960s revealed that Catholics were less likely than Protestants to favor military escalation. Ironically, after loyal service in the Cold War and five hot wars since the 1840s had incrementally legitimated Catholics, opposition to the Vietnam War now brought them further into the American mainstream. When Senator Eugene McCarthy ran for president in 1968, almost no one worried about his religion even though he himself discerned a connection between his Catholic faith and his opposition to the war.[40]

After more than a decade of domestic turmoil, the major political parties in 1976 nominated Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, the most devout pair of presidential candidates since McKinley and Bryan eighty years earlier. In their efforts to preserve détente, promote human rights abroad, and mediate a Middle East peace, there was considerable continuity between the Ford and Carter administrations. Yet Carter was distinctive in his calls for American humility, emphasis on world leadership through moral example, wariness of military intervention, and respect for poor and non-white nations. In his own mind, he was applying to world politics Niebuhr's admonitions against national egotism (much to the distress of Cold War Niebuhrians, who thought he missed the larger point, and of many of his fellow southern evangelicals, who celebrated a more interventionist version of American mission). Carter was a Wilsonian, but a Wilsonian with large doses of Bryanism.[41]

Religious interest groups continued to influence foreign policy in the post-Vietnam era. The most important development—again, virtually inconceivable fifteen years earlier—was the move rightward by a significant minority of Jews. The Jackson-Vanik Amendment was an important landmark along the road. This amendment to a trade treaty was introduced by Senator Henry Jackson to pressure the Soviets into increasing

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Jewish emigration—or to punish them if they failed to do so. At first, Jewish leaders approached the measure cautiously, but most ultimately came around. As was the case with abrogation of the commercial treaty in 1912, a "Jewish" concern attracted widespread support from non-Jews appalled by Russian autocracy. Indeed, the emigration issue provided ample ammunition for critics of détente during the Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations. Carter himself received the smallest percentage of the Jewish vote of any Democratic presidential nominee since the 1920s.[42]

For members of Ronald Reagan's coalition, Carter's diplomatic and military humility was part of the international problem rather than of the solution. As Jeane Kirkpatrick argued, Carter's soft Christianity led him to repudiate friendly authoritarian regimes whose virtues included acceptance of "traditional gods and . . . traditional taboos." In his first substantive meeting with the Soviet ambassador, Reagan himself raised the issue of Russian Pentecostals who, denied permission to emigrate, had been granted asylum at the American embassy in Moscow; they were subsequently allowed to emigrate. Most important, following almost two decades of détente in fact if not in name, Reagan himself resumed the presidential practice of bluntly denouncing the Soviet Union as the source of atheistic evil. Presidential aides raised in the pre-Vatican II world of Catholic anti-communism worked with Pope John Paul II to crack open the East bloc. In 1984 Reagan sent an ambassador to the Vatican and encountered only minimal grumbling from his allies on the new Christian right. In addition to evangelicals and fundamentalists, Reagan's remarkable religious coalition included working class Catholics, neoconservative Jews, and even a few apostate CALCAV doves.[43]

Opposition to Reagan's foreign policy was also eclectic. With varying fervor and acuity, members of the historic peace churches, a small band of radical evangelicals, Billy Graham, and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops criticized the nuclear buildup that lay at the center of the administration's military strategy. The army chief of chaplains resigned to protest both that buildup and American intervention in Central America. Although odd alliances sometimes flourished, Protestant theological liberals tended to be doves and theological conservatives tended to be hawks. Thus foreign policy issues joined with doctrinal and domestic cultural differences to drive these two groups further apart.[44]

The rituals of civil religion as they relate to foreign policy remained intact after the Cold War. President George Bush invited Billy Graham to spend the night at the White House on the eve of the Gulf War in 1991. Yet these rituals became increasingly complicated as immigration altered the American religious scene. In the midst of his confrontation with the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, President Carter took pains to commemorate Islamic holidays and distinguish Muslim friends from Muslim foes. Nor were complications confined to the home front. President Bush's invocations of God prompted some Muslims to complain that he was leading a religious war against Islam itself, rather than a limited effort to roll back the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Meanwhile, military personnel deployed to Saudi Arabia were barred from wearing religious insignia, discouraged from receiving Christmas cards, and obliged to camouflage New Testaments.[45]

Avid Wilsonians who wanted the United States to organize and lead international posses faced an especially difficult problem following the Cold War. After winning the great ideological conflict of this century, Americans across the political and religious spectrums began reverting to their visceral Bryanism. If they were to lead the world at all, they preferred to do so by example.

This problem was particularly acute for Wilsonian Republicans. Theologically conservative Protestants joined the Reagan coalition primarily because they considered the Democrats too liberal on such issues as abor-

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tion, gay rights, and school prayer. Aside from a theologically based commitment to Israel, rank-and-file fundamentalists and Pentecostals showed only a routine patriotic interest in foreign affairs even during the Cold War. Both Wilsonian Republicans and Pat Buchanan, who finds his usable diplomatic past in the America First Committee, consider this constituency up for grabs. Whatever its strengths and weaknesses as a matter of diplomatic policy, the proposed Freedom from Religious Persecution Act seems intended to keep theologically conservative Protestants in the Republican and internationalist fold.[46]

A Limited Impact

AMIDST RISING interest in the relationship between religion and foreign policy, what, in general terms, can we conclude about the American experience? First, a strong republican sense of mission thrived apart from the legacies of Reformation-era Protestantism. In the absence of these Protestant influences, the United States still would have risen to world power and probably would have justified the rise with ideological claims akin to the French "mission to civilize."[47] Moreover, the American sense of mission has been complicated by the Catholic and Jewish presence, by divisions and shifts within Protestantism itself, and above all by secular concerns about economic advantage, national security, and race. Rigorous fundamentalists aside, even the Protestant theological conservatives who still regard the United States as a "city upon a hill" are less likely than their forebears who lived in less affluent times to expect much retribution for personal or national sins. Instead of trembling before divine judgment, they are more inclined to expect God to bless the United States as a matter of course.

Second, although religious interest groups at home and religious issues abroad have affected foreign policy, no *major* diplomatic decision has turned on religious issues alone. For example, Eisenhower would have aided Diem in the 1950s without the Catholic Church's urging. On the other hand, religious interest groups *have* significantly affected subsidiary foreign policies. FDR hesitated to help the Spanish Republic partly because most American Catholics supported Franco; Truman recognized Israel partly to woo Jewish voters. In such instances, however, religious interest groups have been most effective when they have found allies outside their own communities and invoked widely shared American values.

Third, serious religious ideas have had at most an indirect impact on policymakers—far less, for example, than strategic, economic, or political considerations, perceptions of public opinion, and the constraints of office. Kennan's Niebuhrian doubts about human perfectibility rendered him more prudent than many of his fellow cold warriors, yet he expressed more caution in retirement than he had shown as a State Department employee. Similarly, Carter was able to advocate international human rights with greater consistency as an ex-president than as president. Equally important, not only can divergent policy prescriptions be inferred from the Bible and other sacred texts, but also even the theories of interpretation have multiplied as the religious scene has become increasingly complex. Carter joked in 1980 that, unlike his critic, dispensationalist Jerry Falwell, he found no passage in Scripture determining whether "you should have a B-1 bomber or the air-launched cruise missile."[48]

Fourth, major foreign policies have significantly affected the domestic religious scene—sometimes in ways that no one anticipated. A war for independence won during the Enlightenment brought about the separation of church and state which, in turn, facilitated a vigorous competition among legally equal denominations. American expansion on this continent fueled Protestant nativist fears that the West might be conquered again—by Catholics and Mormons. The First World War ushered in a decade of religious conflict unparalleled in this century. The war against Nazism helped to banish anti-Semitism from public life. Vigorous

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Catholic patriotism both legitimated Catholicism and distressed some of the Protestant elite. From the mid-1960s until the end of the Cold War, fundamentalists and social gospelers clashed over Vietnam and détente as well as Darwinism and biblical criticism.

These general trends will probably persist for the foreseeable future. In the near term, passage of the Wolf-Specter bill would complicate foreign—and perhaps domestic—policy in ways that no one has thought through. Although proponents focus on the persecution of Christians, no government agency can protect one faith and survive constitutional challenge. Accordingly, the president or State Department would have to decide what constitutes legitimate religious practices. This has been no easy matter in the domestic arena. In addition, the president or State Department would have to decide what constitutes persecution. Murder, torture, rape, abduction, forced relocation, and arbitrary arrest or imprisonment obviously qualify. Yet, as critics of the bill suggest, these actions deserve denunciation regardless of whether there is an anti-religious motive.

Certainly there would be gray areas in the definition of both religion and persecution. Moreover, these areas of contention would inevitably multiply as religious interest groups pressured the Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring to broaden its activities, and the law's provision for withdrawing aid from governments that merely acquiesce in persecution would encourage this tendency. Are Muslims—who are cited frequently in the Wolf-Specter bill as perpetrators of persecution—themselves victims of persecution in India? Does Germany persecute Scientologists? Does Israel persecute Reform Jews or the non-Jewish spouses of Jews? Does the domination of Nigeria by Muslims reflect religious bigotry, ethnic solidarity, majority rule, or all of the above? To what extent would victims of persecution be eligible for asylum in the United States? Would the president ask Saudi Arabia to grant Christian and Jewish soldiers stationed there the right to practice openly their own faiths and perhaps to proselytize?

Finally, is it ever acceptable for countries to preserve atheistic systems or religious homogeneity? If not, then non-Christians might plausibly complain that the Wolf-Specter bill promotes the world's foremost evangelical religion, Christianity, which also happens to be the majority religion of the United States. When many Americans remember missionaries in China, they think of their denominational heroes and heroines; but when many Chinese remember missionaries in China, they think of the "unequal treaties" imposed on their country. To some readers of this journal my concern about cultural imperialism may sound like an archaic echo from the Sixties. But the practical and ethical complexities will not disappear. □

Endnotes

[1]A copy of the bill is available from Representative Wolf's office via the Internet at www.house.gov/wolf/free.

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[3]John Winthrop, "A Modell of Christian Charity", in Conrad Cherry, *God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny* (Englewood: Prentice Hall, 1971), pp. 39-43.

[4]Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967). Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), pp. 119-21.

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[6]William Gribbin, *The Churches Militant: The War of 1812 and American Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

[7]Ezra Stiles, "The United States Elevated to Glory and Honour", in Cherry, *God's New Israel*, pp. 82-92. Richard W. Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1965), p. 69.

[8]O'Sullivan quoted in Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation* (New York: Vintage, 1963), pp. 31-2. Norman Graebner, ed., *Manifest Destiny* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1963), p. xix.

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[11]Borden, *Jews, Turks, and Infidels*, pp. 87-9, 54-6. Sachar, *Jews in America*, p. 82. David I. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgaro Mortara* (New York: Knopf, 1997), p. 122.

[12]Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 862. Martin E. Marty, *Pilgrims in Their Own Land: 500 Years of Religion in America* (New York: Penguin, 1985), pp. 182-4. Richard W. Van Alstyne, *The United States and East Asia* (New York: Norton, 1973), pp. 69, 72. Thomas J. McCormick, *"China Market": America's Quest for Informal Empire 1893-1901* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1967), p. 66. Michael H. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship: The United States and China to 1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 24-39. Warren I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: An Interpretive History of Sino-American Relations* (New York: Wiley, 1973), pp. 12-24.

[13]Marty, *Pilgrims*, p. 184. Cohen, *America's Response to China*, p. 28. Borden, *Jews, Turks, and Infidels*, pp. 79-82.

[14]The scholarly literature on these religious developments is enormous; for a brief overview, see Ahlstrom, *Religious History*, ch. 44-51.

[15]Richard V. Pierard and Robert D. Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency* (Grand Rapids: Academie, 1988), pp. 114-17. Josiah Strong, *Our Country* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, [1886] 1963), p. 254.

[16]Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion*, pp. 122-9. Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), pp. 154-5. Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1964), pp. 279-316.

[17]Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion*, p. 131. May, *Imperial Democracy*, pp. 243-62. Richard E. Welch, Jr., *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp. 88-90, 93-9.

[18]Welch, *Response to Imperialism*, pp. 90-2, 97. Hunt, *The Making of a Special Relationship*, pp. 154-168, 286-8.

[19]Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion*, pp. 136-60. John Milton Cooper, Jr., *The Warrior and the Priest: Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 18-19, 88. William Harbaugh, *The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Collier, 1966), pp. 213-16. Theodore Roosevelt, "Warlike Power—The Prerequisite for the Preservation of Social Values", in William Harbaugh, ed., *The Writings of Theodore Roosevelt* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967), pp. 353-64. For the conventional interpretation of Wilson's religion, see Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War, and Peace* (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, 1979), pp. 4-5.

[20]Sachar, *Jews in America*, pp. 221-34.

[21]Richard Challener, "William Jennings Bryan", in Norman A. Graebner, *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), pp. 94-5. Lawrence W. Levine, *Defender of the Faith: William Jennings Bryan: The Last Decade, 1915-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 29-30.

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[23]Abrams, *Preachers Present Arms*, p. 130. William Vance Trollinger, Jr., *God's Empire: William Bell Riley and Midwestern Fundamentalism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), pp. 33-61. For the essentials of premillennial dispensationalism, readers may tune in Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, or Jack Van Impe on their cable television hookups. A more detached explanation can be found in Paul Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More: Prophecy Belief in Modern American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[24]Dorothy Borg, *American Policy and the Chinese Revolution 1925-1928* ([New York]: East Asia Institute, 1968), pp. 68-94. Yuming Shaw, *An American Missionary in China: John Leighton Stuart and Chinese-American Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 92-100. John P. Diggins, *Mussolini and Fascism: The View from America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 182-203. Boyer, *Time Shall Be No More*, pp. 108-9.

[25]Peter G. Filene, *Americans and the Soviet Experiment, 1917-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 83-8, 246-51. Robert Moats Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues 1919-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958), pp. 40-4, 68-71.

[26]Lawrence S. Wittner, *Rebels Against War: The American Peace Movement 1933-1983* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), pp. 5-13. Abrams, *Preachers Present Arms*, pp. 3, 234-9.

[27]Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1935* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 79-81. E. David Cronon, *Josephus Daniels in Mexico* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1960), pp. 82-111. Karl M. Schmitt, *Mexico and the United States 1821-1973: Conflict and Coexistence* (New York: Wiley, 1974), pp. 171-3.

[28]Dallek, *Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy*, pp. 136, 141-2, 179-180. Hennesey, *American Catholics*, pp. 272-4. David J. O'Brien, *American Catholics and Social Reform: The New Deal Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 86-7. "American Catholics Reply", in Allen Guttmann, *American Neutrality and the Spanish Civil War* (Boston: Heath, 1963), p. 61.

[29]Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion*, pp. 178-9.

[30]Alfred O. Hero, Jr., *American Religious Groups View Foreign Policy: Trends in Rank-And-File Opinion, 1937-1969* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1973), pp. 21, 23. Diggins, *Mussolini and Italy*, pp. 346-7. Justus D. Doenecke, *In Danger Undaunted: The Anti-Interventionist Movement of 1940-1941 as Revealed in the Papers of the America First Committee* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1990), pp. 7-8. Leo P. Ribuffo, *The Old Christian Right: The Protestant Far Right from the Great Depression to the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983). Wittner, *Rebels*, pp. 15, 16, 22, 43, 158, 189. Richard Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (New York: Pantheon, 1985), pp. 193-200.

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[38]Donald F. Crosby, *God, Church, and Flag: Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and the Catholic Church, 1950-1957* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978). James Terence Fisher, *The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933-1962* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), pp. 152-66.

[39]Wittner, *Rebels*, pp. 279-89. Mitchell K. Hall, *Because of Their Faith: CALCAV and Religious Opposition to the Vietnam War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). Anne C. Loveland, *American Evangelicals and the U.S. Military 1942-1993* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), pp. 118-64. David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: Morrow, 1986), pp. 543, 551-2. George S. McGovern, *Grassroots: The Autobiography of George McGovern* (New York: Random House, 1977). Fox, *Niebuhr*, p. 288.

[40]Hennesey, *American Catholics*, pp. 318-21. Garry Wills, *Bare Ruined Choirs: Doubt, Prophecy, and Radical Religion* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1972), p. 232.

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[46]James L. Guth, et al., *The Bully Pulpit: The Politics of Protestant Clergy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997), ch. 5-6. Jeffrey Goldberg, "Washington Discovers Christian Persecution", *New York Times Magazine*, December 21, 1997, pp. 46-52, 60, 64-5.

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Motes and Beams

The United States has been working quietly with other nations to defuse a growing confrontation between Russia and Latvia. . . . Administration officials have grown increasingly concerned over Moscow's 'bullying rhetoric and tactics against Latvia', including threats of economic sanctions. . . . The State Department spokesman, James P. Rubin, said sanctions would be counterproductive. 'The two countries should work out their problems through diplomatic channels', he said.

—The* New York Times *reports the official American attitude toward the Russian threat of economic sanctions against Latvia. The U.S. government has itself sanctioned or threatened to sanction 35 countries on more than 60 occasions since January 1993.

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1848, Seed Plot of History

To comprehend the revolutions of 1848 is to comprehend all modern European history.

—A.J.P. Taylor

One cannot recollect those days without acute pain. . . . France was moving with the velocity of a falling star towards the inevitable *coup d'état*. . . . The whole thing was a contradiction in terms: an open conspiracy, a plot concocted behind open doors.

—Alexander Herzen, *Memoirs*

Nowhere did I see the seething unrest I had witnessed in 1830, when the whole city reminded me of one vast, boiling cauldron. This time it was not a matter of overthrowing the government, but simply of letting it fall. . . . The whole time I had the feeling that we had staged a play about the French Revolution, rather than that we were continuing it. Despite the naked swords, bayonets and muskets, I could not for a moment persuade myself that anybody, let alone myself, could be in danger of death.

—Alexis de Tocqueville, *Recollections*, on the events of February 24

The things that had been done in Paris on February 24th were told in Vienna on February 29th. . . . Within a week there came the news that all Germany was in commotion. The tyranny of imitation had set in; and fashion moved swiftly from the west eastwards. . . . People seemed to suppose that they could make up for bad harvests and industrial depression, to say nothing of deeper deficiencies of character and conduct, by imports of political millinery from Paris and London. Led by Baden and the Rhineland, the German nation clamoured for costumes in the union-and-liberty style of the hour.

—Algernon Cecil, *Metternich*

A magnificent new dawn was surely breaking. Rome, Vienna and Berlin were in revolt; the Austrians had been kicked out of Venice; the whole of Europe was in ferment. It was time to hurl oneself into the fray and perhaps help events along; he was also greatly attracted by the clothes which, it was said, the Deputies would be having. He could already see himself wearing a tricolour sash and a waistcoat with lapels.

—Gustave Flaubert, *A Sentimental Education*

They yearn for events, immense, sudden, and strange; they busy themselves with making and and unmaking governments, nations, religions, society, Europe, the world. . . . To hear them talk, one might think that they had the elements and ages at their command . . . and that these were the first days of creation or the last days of the world.

—François Guizot, Premier of France at the beginning of 1848

[The Vienna liberals] were not prepared to run the revolution themselves, but expected the dynasty to run it for them. . . . One has only to compare the great Committee of Public Safety of the French Revolution, ruling the entire country and directing the march of the French armies, with its latter-day namesake in Vienna, which confined itself to pressing liberal advice upon the terrified imperial bureaucrats.

—Taylor

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150th Anniversary

The fraternity of the two opposing classes (one of which exploits the other) . . . lasted just so long as the interests of the bourgeoisie could fraternize with the interests of the proletariat. Pedants of the old revolutionary tradition of 1793, socialist systematizers who begged the bourgeoisie to grant favours to the people, . . . republicans who wanted the whole of the old bourgeois system, minus the crowned figurehead, legitimists who did not wish to doff their livery but merely to change its cut—these had been the people's allies in the February revolution!

—Karl Marx

When they began to hear talk of the disorder prevailing in Paris . . . and especially when they heard that the principle of property was being attacked, they realized that something more than Louis-Phillippe was at stake. . . . A universal terror gripped the countryside. Neither jealousy nor pride separated the peasant from the rich man any longer, or the bourgeois from the gentleman. . . . Ownership constituted a sort of fraternity linking all who had anything.

—Tocqueville

Whenever the prisoners went up to the ventilator, the National Guardsmen in charge would poke their bayonets in at random, indiscriminately, to prevent them from shaking the grating. By and large they were merciless. The ones who'd taken no part in the actual fighting were particularly anxious to demonstrate their keenness . . . the gentry proved as ferocious as the rabble and the cotton night-cap of the middle classes no less hideous than the Red Cap. The public mind was disturbed, as though after some cataclysm. Some intelligent people remained fools for the rest of their lives as a result.

—Flaubert

How in those unhappy times a taste for violence and a contempt for human life suddenly spread. The men I was talking to were sober, peaceful artisans whose gentle and slightly soft mores were even farther removed from cruelty than from heroism. But they were dreaming of nothing but destruction and massacre.

—Tocqueville on the events of June 6

'I really think you've let all this affect you far too much, Father', the consul said. 'When one considers what buffoonery the whole thing was—a farce. . . . You see, Father, the revolution in Berlin was rehearsed at the tea tables of aesthetes, and then had to be carried out by the people, at the risk of their own skins. But will it be worth the cost they've been asked to pay?'

—Thomas Mann, *Buddenbrooks*

Most of the men of 1848 lacked political experience, and before a year was out the 'trees of liberty' planted by them had withered away. None the less, 1848 remains a seed-plot of history. It crystallized ideas and projected the pattern of things to come; it determined the course of the century which followed.

—Lewis Namier

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Mao in History

Ross Terrill

EARLY ONE MORNING in the summer of 1972, John King Fairbank, my senior colleague among Harvard's East Asia faculty at the time, phoned to ask if I would look over a draft article for *Foreign Affairs* summing up his first trip to China since the 1940s. The piece was fairly indulgent toward Mao's regime. Over lunch that day, I said to Fairbank, "This trip to China must have been moving." He nodded and said, "Well, you know, I've been on their side ever since 1943." In Fairbank's draft I queried the sentence: "The Maoist revolution is on the whole the best thing that has happened to the Chinese people in many centuries." The dean of American Sinology, to whom I owe much, stuck with it. But he added the words: "At least, most Chinese seem now to believe so, and it will be hard to prove otherwise."

During the first decades of Mao's China, a time of American self-confidence and strong sense of purpose spurred by the World War II victory, U.S. Sinology for the most part took on an "idealist" rather than a "realist" orientation: hopeful about social progress, benevolent in its view of human nature, open to strong leadership. Since America was the chief bastion outside China of contemporary China studies, this buoyant, progressive mindset influenced the worldwide image of Mao Zedong. True, during the first years after 1949 Mao was viewed in a totalitarian framework as a junior Stalin, but within a decade this view gave way to a more open-minded one of the Chinese leader as a flexible Asian communist. The Sino-Soviet split in the early 1960s and the subsequent Nixon opening to China of 1971-72 further softened Mao's image.

While he was serving as President Nixon's national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, back at Harvard in January 1971 for a dinner with international affairs faculty, remarked that whereas in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations "Dean Rusk used to compare Mao unfavorably with Hitler, in this administration we compare Mao favorably with Hitler." A small change, strictly speaking, yet a large change in political-philosophical terms.

Even after Mao's death in 1976, Sinologists, influential Americans like Nixon and Kissinger, and many leaders of the Democratic Party tended to defend the rationality and sincerity of the Chinese leader's attempts at social engineering, while acknowledging his excesses and errors in the Great Leap Forward (communes, backyard steel furnaces) of the late 1950s, and the Cultural Revolution (Red Guards, book burning) of the late 1960s. Distilled through U.S. Sinological research, the popular image of Mao in the West—until the 1990s—was less

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bleak than those of Stalin and Hitler, which were more shaped by the "realist" approach of European political science. It took most of the Deng Xiaoping era (1979-97) to make Mao look really bad.

American Sinology was traditionally more idealistic, too, than Sinology pursued in Taiwan. Among American scholars there was well into the 1960s a tenacious expectation of unity in the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), against mounting signs to the contrary and in the face of evidence collected by China scholars in Taiwan that Mao was in tension with his top colleague, Liu Shaoqi, and other senior figures. As a student embarking on China studies, I adopted some of this idealism—modified by Australian skepticism—and my early writings lacked realism about Chinese politics. During the Cultural Revolution, American analysts were more inclined than those in Taiwan to see idealistic impulses behind the Red Guard turmoil. In general, from 1949 onward American Sinology focused on what made communist China tick, while Taiwanese analyses focused on cracks in the edifice of the regime.

The loss of life during Mao's Great Leap Forward was estimated by Richard Walker, a leading anti-communist scholar of the 1960s and 1970s, at 1-2 million. As a graduate student at Harvard in the late 1960s, I remember John Fairbank scoffing at Walker's "extreme views" about sufferings during the PRC's first decade. Some indulgence toward Mao's errors by Fairbank and others stemmed from resentment at Senator Joseph McCarthy's potshots at China specialists. Still, the picture we now have of the Great Leap Forward, based largely on documentary sources available within China, is much bleaker than that suggested by the hardest of anti-communists in the 1960s. A thorough 1996 study, *Hungry Ghosts*, by the British journalist Jasper Becker, puts the loss of life at 30 million.

China specialists during the 1960s and 1970s could see a number of evils and injustices in China; if pressed, few of us would have denied that China harbored tens of thousands of political prisoners, or claimed that the former Defense Minister Peng Dehuai—who questioned the Great Leap Forward—got a fair go from Mao in their confrontation of 1959. Yet an intellectual fascination with the gyrations of Chinese communist politics operated to restrain our judgment. This tendency toward a hands-off objectivity was reinforced by the existence of polemicists who did *only* evaluation, wielding totalitarian theory crudely or taking a purely moral stance toward Chinese communism.

WHO WOULD have guessed at Mao's death in 1976, or even at the tenth anniversary of his death in 1986, that by the twentieth anniversary in 1996 much of the focus on Mao would have shifted to his personal ways—indeed to that most personal of all realms, sexual life? But then Americans of the Ronald Reagan era in the 1980s might not have guessed that a U.S. president elected in 1992 would spend his first months in the White House on the issue of homosexuals in the military, the first weeks after his re-election in 1996 on the issue of sexual harassment in the military, and much of early 1998 defending himself against rumors of sex in the White House.

In 1980, I was criticized in reviews of the first edition of my biography *Mao* for paying too much attention to Mao's personality and personal life. Professor Edwin Moise spoke for many when, in the bibliography of his 1986 book *Modern China: A History*, he recommended my book but warned that it "concentrates too much on details of Mao's personal life." Yet a decade later, in a number of serious works, details of Mao's personal life took center stage. Although my suggestion of the possibility of intimacy between Mao and his "confidential secretary" Zhang Yufeng had been rejected, later revelations turned possibility into certainty. Today, indeed, Mao is as often viewed as a conspirator and lecher as he is as a unifier of China, philosopher of Asian communism, and major architect of the collapse of the communist bloc.

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A tendency to believe the best about Mao was not the only reason why Western Sinology was for some years disinclined to see the pathological in him. Another was the absence of authoritative evidence of his willful and mindless ways. By the 1990s the material base for viewing Mao's methods of rule has become much more extensive than it was during his lifetime. More than any other single work in English, it is *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (1994) by Dr. Li Zhisui that consolidates this new perception in the West. Despite questions one might have about the reasons for Mao's physician's sourness toward Mao and the CCP, the book is the only memoir we have by a close associate of the leader who defected from China and then told his story.[1]

Li Zhisui was an elitist intellectual. Little in his background or the working of his mind suggested sympathy for communist goals. But Mao liked staff members who had been in the West or had a Western education: Li had returned to China from Australia after the communist takeover, seeking to make a contribution to his homeland. When summoned to serve as Mao's doctor in 1954, he demurred on the ground that his "class background" was far from working-class, but Mao told him that "sincerity" was all that counted. Perhaps there was an admirable root to Mao's embrace of the stubborn physician. Sycophancy was the norm in Mao's court, but Dr. Li was a rather arrogant man who sometimes declined to oblige, and something in Mao may have recognized the authenticity of Li's independence of mind. Or perhaps Mao liked the challenge of correcting a wayward intellectual.

THE WEST is in a phase of skepticism about leadership, and it needs China less than it did in the 1970s and 1980s. Both points have affected the discussion of Mao, as they have affected U.S.-China relations. Two or three decades after the death of the last titans of the World War II era—De Gaulle, Chiang Kai-shek, Mao—China studies have become influenced by the anti-heroic lens now typically applied to political leaders. Economists and sociologists, with their focus on structure rather than will, lead the field in China studies. It is revealing that Lucian Pye told us in 1996 that he pulled his punches in his 1976 book *Mao Zedong: The Man in the Leader* in not stating—as he says he believed—that Mao "was probably a narcissist with a borderline personality." By 1996 he felt he could come out with his long-held conclusion. The evidence for Pye's delayed conclusion of Mao as a borderline personality mounts by the year. It includes his youthful loneliness and fascist ideas, the constant psychosomatic illness to which his doctor testifies (Li uses the term "neurasthenia", which is no longer in wide professional use), his treatment of family members, his addiction to barbiturates, his lack of give-and-take with colleagues, and his suspiciousness.

Mental problems were not unique to Mao. The fear and tension of the communists' pre-1949 military and political struggle, and later of the pressure-cooker life within the Mao court, brought on similar mental conditions in scores of people around him. The cause of the anxiety differed as between Mao himself and his underlings. Mao felt a gnawing anxiety that people around him might be secretly disloyal. The underlings were simply afraid of dismissal, banishment, or death. Dr. Li goes so far as to say, "In time, I came to regard neurasthenia as a peculiarly Communist disease."

Here are Mao's words to Dr. Li just after his encounter with Khrushchev in 1958 on the problems of the Taiwan Strait and dealing with the United States:

> Khrushchev just doesn't know what he's talking about. He wants to improve relations with the U.S. Good, we'll congratulate him with our guns. Our cannon shells have been in storage

[1]Dr. Li had a motive to maximize Mao's faults and especially his promiscuity. Li's own father was unfaithful to his mother—much to Li's chagrin—and Li felt he was badly treated in Beijing in the years after Mao's death.

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> for so long they're becoming useless. So why don't we just use them for a celebration? Let's get the U.S. involved, too. Maybe we can get the U.S. to drop an atom bomb on Fujian. Maybe ten or twenty million people will be killed. Chiang Kai-shek wants the U.S. to use the bomb against us. Let them use it. Let's see what Khrushchev says then.

Indeed, these words, if seriously meant as Dr. Li took them to be, are those of a borderline personality.

A second example shows the problem of the influence of drugs that Mao's doctor saw as early as 1958:

> Even as he spoke about sending me to inspect the people's communes [crown jewel of the Great Leap Forward], Mao was falling asleep and his speech was slurred, his voice nearly inaudible. He had taken his sleeping pills just before we started eating and had brought up the idea of the investigation in the midst of that half-awake, half-asleep euphoria he entered as the drug began to take effect. I was not sure whether his suggestion was real or part of a drug-induced dream.[2]

There were an increasing number of pivotal moments after 1958 when Mao may well have been mentally or physically unfit to make the decisions he did. One of them, documented by eye-witnesses still living in Beijing, was crucial to relations between China and the United States.

It was 1971 and, after much discussion, a decision had just been made in Beijing not to invite the American ping-pong team to visit China. Premier Zhou Enlai had sent a message to Japan, where the American team was traveling, regretting China's inability to receive the Americans. But one night a heavily drugged Mao had second thoughts. At midnight on April 6, he looked again at the document containing the foreign ministry's recommendation not to invite the American sportsmen—already approved both by Zhou and himself. In "drowsy, slurred speech" he asked his nurse to phone Wang Hairong, the trusted aide at the foreign ministry, to reverse the decision. The nurse, without either a tape recorder or anyone to advise her, was in a quandary. Possessed of doubts, she nevertheless decided to phone Wang Hairong. The American ping-pong players were invited; Kissinger and Nixon soon followed. History made a turn.[3]

Everyone who came in close contact with Mao was shocked at the anarchy of his personal ways. He ate idiosyncratically. He refused to brush his teeth, offering as his excuse that tigers with excellent teeth did not brush theirs. He became increasingly sexually promiscuous as he aged. He would stay up much of the night and sleep during much of the day; at times he would postpone sleep, remaining awake for thirty-six hours or more, until tension and exhaustion overcame him. He was the consummate outlaw, "without law and without God." Said Dr. Li to me when I showed him around the Harvard campus in 1994: "Three words did not exist in Mao's dictionary: regret, love, mercy."

Yet many people who met Mao came away deeply impressed by his intellectual reach, originality, style of power-within-simplicity, kindness toward low-level staff members, and the aura of respect that surrounded him at the top of Chinese politics. It would seem difficult to reconcile these two disparate views of Mao. But in a fundamental sense there was no brick wall between the personal and the public Mao.

Early in Mao's career of cavorting with girls—despite the proximity of his longtime wife Jiang Qing—some provincial leaders made the mistake of supplying him with sophisticated beauties of mature years and artistic accomplishment. Mao turned them all down; for his private moments he did not want

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[2]Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (New York: Random House, 1994), pp. 109, 262, 265.

[3]Lin Ke, Xu Tao, and Wu Xujun, *Li shi de zhenshi* (Hong Kong: Liuwen chubanshe, 1995), pp. 306-8.

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famous actresses and singers, but inexperienced peasant maidens one third his own age.

One pretty young woman, Cui Ying, who worked in the office of secretaries in Zhongnanhai in the late 1950s, caught Mao's eye. While dancing with him, we learn in a memoir published in Beijing, she took the opportunity to complain about the unjust labeling of good people as "rightists" in the leftist campaign of 1957. A strict boundary had been crossed. Cui Ying's body was needed, but not her mind. For heaven's sake, she might *quote* Mao outside Zhongnanhai. Suddenly, one afternoon before an upcoming dance party at which she was to see Mao again, she found herself terminated as a staff member.[4]

Mao's turn to young women was connected with the decline of trust in the men around him. Sex became an avenue to a oneness that no longer existed in the councils of party and state. The limitation was that Mao could achieve oneness (whether sexual or philosophic) only with innocent young men and women who adored him, or with staff members and junior colleagues who accorded him total loyalty. "What Mao thought, I thought", said his doctor. "It was not that I had contrary opinions that I had to suppress or keep to myself. Mao's opinions were mine. The possibility of differing with the Chairman never crossed my mind." It need hardly be said that any attempt to translate such oneness to the institutional and public life of a nation of six hundred million people—a *da tong* ("great unity") based on personal feelings—was an impossibility, and to essay it was to court disaster.

THE REAL SHOCK in the "personal" revelations of *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* was less moral than political: Mao *did not believe* a lot of what he proclaimed in public. We find it in small matters and in large. He sang the praises of Chinese traditional medicine, but when it came to his own health he used Western medicine. The Soviet Union disgusted him even as he lauded it for public consumption; he said good things about America while telling the Chinese people that America was the embodiment of evil.

Perhaps Mao did not "mean" some of the things he said in private. Perhaps he was like Richard Nixon, who ranted about Ivy League types and Jews, yet never took action against these sub-groups and went on hiring them in substantial numbers for the White House staff. Yet the two cases are not the same. In the cold light of day, after an evening of uttering stress-reducing threats, Nixon could not easily take action to reduce the influence of Ivy League types and Jews; he was President of a country with laws, a vigorous Congress, and a free press. But when old Mao murmured a judgment for or against a person or a policy, the staff member who heard it set in motion steps of implementation. In a democracy, the individual psyche of the top leader is simply not reflected in public policy as it is in a communist dictatorship.

Thus, the wife of Liu Shaoqi was about to be executed in 1969 when Mao, giving final review to the papers on her case, scrawled, "Spare her the knife."[5] She lives on to this day. One day a male guard touched one of Mao's girlfriends on the buttocks; Mao had the man sent to prison and no one at Mao's court ever heard of him again. So it went; Mao's whim was the law of the land.

The "late Mao" was different from the early and middle Mao. He had not always been vain, insincere, vindictive, arrogant, or duplicitous. In middle age, to take examples from the testimony of his most impressive secretary, Tian Jiaying, Mao was not immodest. When commended for his opening speech at the Eighth Party Congress in 1956, he said, "Do you know who wrote my speech? A young scholar—Tian Jiaying." The Mao of 1949-50 read all of the many letters that reached him from the general public. By 1966 he did not even deign to *address* the general

[4]Cheng Yi and Jia Mei, *Mao Zedong shenghuo shilu, 1946-76* (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1989), pp. 103-5.

[5]*Gongren ribao*, Beijing, December 6, 1980.

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public; at Tiananmen Square as the Red Guards gathered before him, he merely raised an arm and gave a glassy smile. The Mao of 1950 could cry over the suffering of individuals from the grassroots, but the Mao of the Cultural Revolution did not. Tian Jiaying could testify that Mao changed, for the change wrecked Tian's career and ultimately led him to kill himself.[6]

To gain perspective on Mao's career at the summit of power in China, one may imagine a Ronald Reagan who not only ruled for the eight years he was elected to office, but also long previously (when a Democrat) and long afterwards (when afflicted with Alzheimer's disease). This approximates the span and subjective variation of Mao's decades-long "reign" in Beijing. Mao's career evolved through an embrace of universal individualism (as a youth), to a phase of belief in Soviet-inspired proletarian progress (in the early 1920s), to peasant revolt (late 1920s), on to war communism (in Yanan), socialist building (the 1950s), disillusion with the results of socialism (from the late 1950s), a philosophical and moral coarsening (1960s), and a final return to a highly subjective individualism (1970s).

It would be nonsensical to say Mao did not change his views and ways over this spectacular lifetime, no less than it would be to say that the Reagan of the White House years was to be equated with the victim of Alzheimer's disease living in retirement in California. But given the Chinese system, most of the different "Maos" were part of the single until-death political rule of Mao.

Hence the more we learn about Mao the person, the more we are driven to analyze the system over which he presided. Because he exercised power for so long, and held it until he died, Mao's personal doubts and decline were translated into gyrations of the Chinese state. Intrigue was unleashed. Uncertainty—the oxygen of Mao's court—turned colleagues and staff into fearful conspirators. The imperial-plus-Leninist system acted as a magnifying glass, giving a huge dimension to each quirk of his personality. But in the service of what vision of history and society did this personality enlist itself?

THERE WAS a sharp dualism to Mao's political ideas. His political methods and his notions of how China related to the non-Chinese world probably owed more to Chinese traditions than to Marxism-Leninism. There was little about the modern world—other than Marxism—that Mao knew well; he reached into Chinese tradition for his instinctual knowledge. Yet Chinese tradition did not provide Mao his goals. These came from the social engineering arsenal of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism. In its fullness, this meant nothing less than the refashioning of the Chinese spirit away from balance and nearer to polarization, away from harmony and nearer to struggle, away from private values and toward the collective values of an Eastern Sparta. The mismatch between goal and method caused many of the tragedies of the Mao era. The clashes between the two began long before the spectacular problems of the 1960s and 1970s, but they intensified as Mao used stratagems from the old novels *Dream of the Red Chamber* and *Journey to the West* to prosecute the heightened Marxist class struggle of the Cultural Revolution. As his subjectivism soared, "class" meant little more than a way to demarcate friend and enemy of the moment.

It is surprisingly common for Western scholars of China, still today, to assume that social engineering could have worked if the conditions were correct and it were properly done. I will cite here not extreme cases, but excellent scholars from the pages of *The Politics of China 1949-1989*, which is based on the recent monumental *Cambridge History of China*, whose points of view are widely representative. My own first two books on China[7]—much

[6]Dong Bian, ed., *Mao Zedong he tade mishu Tian Jiaying* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1989), pp. 27, 7-8, 9-10.

[7]*800,000,000: The Real China* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1972); *Flowers on an Iron Tree* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1975).

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earlier volumes—reflect the influence of this same standpoint; my recent ones do not.[8]

Frederick Teiwes says of the state dominance over society that issued from the Three- and Five-Antis campaigns against anti-socialist elements in the early 1950s: "As a result, CCP leaders had achieved a position where planned economic development was genuinely feasible."[9] But surely the twentieth century has taught us that planned economic development is never feasible, "genuinely" or otherwise. We have abundant evidence, most of it from outside China studies, about the disastrous unworkability of the command economy. (One of the best arguments against central planning is Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*, written before Mao's capture of power. Whatever criticisms may be made of Hayek's thesis when applied to Western societies, his title is an apt summation of communist China's journey and travails.) Here, in the social engineering goals of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism, lay the most profound flaw of the post-1949 Mao.

It is not satisfactory to laud the success of the Mao of 1949-57 and say that, from then on, with the onset of the crusade against "rightists" in 1957 and the Great Leap Forward soon after, he "made mistakes" or fell into "excesses." Kenneth Lieberthal is able to call the regime of the 1950s "a wholly legitimate CCP rule."[10] Whence its legitimacy? Communist rule continued in the 1950s for the same reason that communist rule came into being in the 1940s: the power of the gun. The Marxist self-righteousness that gave Mao a sense of his own legitimacy was cut from the same cloth as the self-righteousness that made him declare half the people around him "counter-revolutionaries."

"The specific reasons for the failure of the Great Leap Forward remained unclear", says Lieberthal.[11] But if the reasons for the failure of the Great Leap Forward are not clear to us, then nothing Mao did can be clear to us. Not only Lieberthal but other estimable China specialists still write in the 1990s as if a continuance of the Soviet-model years, without the lurch into the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, might somehow have led to the achievement of Mao's stated goals. Nothing in the experience of the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe suggests that this is valid.

Harry Harding even implies that the Cultural Revolution might have "succeeded" if it had been fully carried out:

> The flaw in Mao's strategy, in other words, was that he waged only half a revolution between 1966 and 1969. He failed to design a viable and enduring alternative political order to replace the one he sought to overthrow. . . . In this sense, the Cultural Revolution was the second unsuccessful Chinese revolution of the twentieth century [following 1911].[12]

But a "revolution" in 1966 would have meant the overthrow of the Communist Party, and that was not Mao's intention. Indeed, the Communist Party was his tool for the social engineering that provided the raison d'être for his being in power. No, the "flaw in

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[8]*Mao* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980, and Touchstone, 1993); *China in Our Time* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992, and Touchstone, 1993); *Madame Mao* (New York: Morrow, 1984, and Touchstone, 1992).

[9]Roderick MacFarquhar, ed., *The Politics of China 1949-1989* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 40.

[10]Ibid., p. 92.

[11]Ibid., p. 114. A recent survey of American Sinology's record by Michael Steinberger in *Lingua Franca* (May/June 1998) takes scholars to task—justifiably—for passing lightly over the famine that followed the Great Leap Forward. But Steinberger, in line with the Sinological tradition on Mao that I am criticizing, cites only the empirical failure to listen to the gruesome reports of refugees fleeing to Hong Kong; he neglects the analytical failure to see the inherent horrors in Mao's entire social engineering project—long predating the Leap.

[12]Ibid., p. 239.

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Mao's strategy" was fully evident in the first half of the "revolution"—he had not even correctly defined his enemy, and the reason was the blindness to reality that social engineering induces.

RECENT scholarship has pushed back in time the critical failures of the CCP-in-power. The same process is evident in the case of the Soviet Union, where a previous notion of Stalin "betraying" Lenin's revolution has given way to a sense of Lenin as one with Stalin in his essential social engineering objectives and their concomitant dictatorial political methods—as shown in Richard Pipes' striking 1996 book *The Unknown Lenin*. Mao's crusade against "rightism" began far earlier than the Cultural Revolution, earlier still than the Great Leap Forward, earlier even than the acceleration of collectivization of 1956. The Thought Reform campaign during the Korean War bears the essential marks of the terroristic methods of the Cultural Revolution. The united front tactics by which businessmen were used and discarded in Shanghai in the early 1950s were one with those pioneered in Yanan a decade earlier and practiced in the use and misuse of allies by Mao throughout his communist career.

Perhaps 1949 is the real watershed in Mao's career, and a more important point of demarcation than any dualism in his own character, not primarily because Mao deteriorated personally after 1949 (that mostly came a decade later), but for reasons inherent in "socialist construction." Benjamin Yang in *From Revolution to Politics* (1990) aptly suggests that, prior to 1949, Mao's "revolutionary idealism" was under the control of his "political realism", whereas after 1949 his "political realism" was at the beck and call of his "revolutionary idealism." From his rich pre-1949 experience of the practice of realism, often in struggle against doctrinaire pro-Moscow colleagues, Mao knew the realist language, and he soothingly spoke it from time to time.

Even as the Great Leap Forward soared, Mao reviewed a report from a certain county in Shandong that ended by saying, "The county will attain communism in two years", and scrawled on it, "add a zero [making it twenty] and the country still won't attain communism."[13] But these flashes of realism were but an intermittent restraint on his rampant leftism. They could not be more than that because Marxist social engineering, Mao's chief post-1949 goal, is inherently unrealistic about the human material that alone can constitute the building blocks of a social order.

The flattering Defense Minister Lin Biao cried that Mao had dealt with questions Marx and Lenin had not grappled with. This was another way of saying that Mao—unlike Marx and Lenin—lived long enough into the period of socialist construction to find out that Marxism in practice was a disaster. Do we not grow suspicious when we find Mao saying of Stalin that he confused the people with the enemy, and then Deng Xiaoping saying the same thing of Mao? Does this not go to the heart of the failure and arrogance of social engineering?

Since at least the anti-rightist drive of 1957, Mao fought two phantoms he would never be able to vanquish: the refusal of the Chinese Communist Party to simply be a Mao Party; and the failure of socialism to take on the splendor he expected of it. Mao's war against phantoms began, like a number of the pathologies of the PRC, in the anti-rightist campaign against loyal, uncomprehending Communist Party functionaries. He wanted the blooming of "a hundred flowers" to result in the rebuke and correction of colleagues who displeased him. He did not want the blooming to question the socialist system, much less his own towering role in it.

But the flowers turned out to be weeds. The criticism from outside the Communist Party did not follow Mao's desires by accomplishing the correction within the party that he sought. Moreover, vociferous anti-socialist

[13] *Mianhuai Mao Zedong* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), vol. 1, p. 239.

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attacks required Mao to make a tactical peace with senior colleagues of whom he did not approve. In this respect, the anti-rightist campaign may be regarded as the true start of the Cultural Revolution. In between came the rise and fall of the Great Leap Forward and the purge of Defense Minister Peng Dehuai. Mao's vindictive struggle against Peng in 1959 was inseparable from his growing willfulness and his strengthening doubts about the socialist goal.

In the tragedy of Peng, the personal and public life of Mao were conjoined. One of Peng's criticisms of Mao was of his philandering. The connection between the Peng-Mao crisis and Mao's growing appetite for young female flesh was that Mao had become more self-indulgent. This resulted in behavior that heightened his isolation from senior colleagues, and in an obsessive quest for rejuvenation at a personal, as well as a political, level. Death crept nearer, and with it the possibility that people would deliver a harsh verdict on his career after he was gone, especially because of the Leap. Physical decline was not to be denied, but clinging to young women, as the emperors had done and the Daoists prescribed, kept the focus away from Mao's own crumbling body. It was on the ashes of the experiment in social engineering that there arose the neo-emperor's rule that Dr. Li Zhisui and other staff members observed.

"Revisionism" came to be the term Mao applied to the alleged betrayal that produced the double disappointment of the Communist Party refusing to be a Mao Party and socialism turning out less pleasing than expected. But revisionism was an illusion. Mao never clearly defined it; hence, he never found a way to eliminate it. He knocked down revisionists, but never revisionism; nor was it possible to do so. No surprise that Mao changed his target several times, lunging after an enemy that, because it did not exist in a form that could be tackled, had to be re-imagined after each failed attack. In the end, Mao simply said the revisionists were "zombies."[14]

Revisionism (in the China of the 1960s) was merely a communist swear word, no more to be taken seriously than the term "social fascist hyenas" once used by Stalinists to describe social democrats. To say Liu Shaoqi was a "bourgeois" who "sneaked into the Party", as Mao's associates did in the 1960s, was on a level with the propaganda of Goebbels. Such lies proliferated because Mao lunged after his two phantoms.

Mao's social engineering clashed with Chinese conditions, his own political methods, and human nature. This problem, evident throughout Mao's mature years, was the major reason both for the instability of policy under his command, and for the inconsistency between his flexible treatment of certain individuals and his ruthlessness toward the welfare of millions.

IN ASSESSING Mao's future reputation, as in observing Beijing politics today, it is important to keep in mind the nature of Leninism and to analyze not only how the post-Deng social-political system works, but where its faultlines lie. The single largest question of perspective for Sinology in the post-Deng years is whether Chinese communism is reforming itself or disintegrating. My own conclusion is that the communist era soon will pass, and that when it does there will be an effort in China to distinguish Mao's contributions from the whole box and dice of Marxism-Leninism.

One day in 1950, Mao came upon his daughter Li Na singing a popular song that included the line, "Without the Communist Party there would not have been China." He rebuked her and said the song should say "New China", not "China." In fact the song was based on an editorial in *Jiefang ribao* (Liberation Daily) in Yanan in 1943, which indeed used the words Li Na sang in the courtyard. The word "New" was not there. But after the incident with Li Na the Communist Party was instructed by Mao to change the words of the

[14] *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, p. 380.

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song.[15] Mao in 1950 had the good sense to realize that the communist era was hardly the start of civilization in China. Likewise, a future Chinese leader may see the end of communist rule as a less than momentous event in the long history of China.

The popular "good Mao/bad Mao" dichotomy is not persuasive. It does not quite work to cut Mao up into a "successful revolutionary" part (up to the 1950s) and a "disastrous leftist" part (from the late 1950s). One day we may see the emergence of a "good Mao/bad *Marxism*" dichotomy. Then it will be said that a number of Mao's contributions to China were made against the tide of Marxism and its chief bastion of the time, the Soviet Union: the focus on peasants, the anti-imperialist frame of reference for the revolution, the attack on Soviet socialism, the turn to the West. John Fairbank's indulgent observation in 1972—"The Maoist revolution is on the whole the best thing that has happened to the Chinese people in many centuries"—will be judged substantially true, though not on ideological grounds.

Mao will be seen as a rebel, a graduate of the University of Outlaws, a *southern* rebel, who like Sun Yat-sen before him went north to overthrow a government. A new post-communist leader of a maritime-oriented China, who may or may not be based in Beijing, will point out that Mao disliked Beijing from his first stay there in the May 4th period, and that in power after 1949 he fled the "northern capital" as often as he could. All his better instincts were those of the peasant rebel from the south, it will be said, not a Marxist Mandarin of the north.

Of course this would be a distortion, as all historical rewrites of the profile of a revolutionary intellectual tend to be. But a drastic reinterpretation of Mao as a patriotic rebel would enable a future leader to reject Marxism in the name of Chinese nationalism, and to claim that the twentieth century brought a slow restoration of China's wealth and power that would have been faster but for the diversion of Marxism-Leninism. When the Chinese Communist Party becomes just the Chinese Party—perhaps not far off—Mao will be buried doctrinally while being saved as a patriot. He will be seen as a valiant latter-day Qin Shihuang, the unifier of China two thousand years ago, handicapped by the un-Chinese doctrine of Marxism.

Yet for now, and as long as the Leninist system endures in Beijing, the pathology seen in Mao's rule enjoys institutional roots beneath the Forbidden City. Today, the retention of power, rather than the pursuit of ideological phantoms, is the motive around which the political process arranges itself. But politics still is theater, and the Communist Party's sense of its own rectitude still makes the populace, not the source of the political process, but puppets for the party's performance of its self-appointed historical role. The proof that Chinese politics remains fundamentally unchanged under Jiang Zemin is that Jiang is being built up as the third of three great CCP figures: Mao, Deng, Jiang. Political reform, on the other hand, would require canceling the notion of a Great Leader, possessing virtue and a doctrine, and towering over party, state, and nation.

The personality of Mao magnified and dramatized the dictatorship in Beijing. Yet it was the goals of social engineering that gave the Mao era its shape and made it tragic. Jiang Zemin's China is traveling down one road in economics and a different one in politics. The marketization of the economy marks a spectacular, historic departure from Mao. But the retention of a Leninist system and the Leninist insistence on the all-knowing wisdom of the Communist Party perpetuates some of the illusions of social engineering. Staying on that road can only lead to a clash between the state and the new economy and society that Deng Xiaoping passed on to Jiang Zemin. On the other hand, if the special right of the Communist Party to be the engineer of Chinese society is abandoned, in one way or another the exciting, turbulent, post-communist history of China will begin. □

[15] *Mao Zedong he tade mishu Tian Jiaying*, p. 4.

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Bad Judgment at Bordeaux

John Laughland

THE CONVICTION in April of the former French treasury minister, Maurice Papon, for complicity in crimes against humanity has been welcomed across the world. That the former secretary-general of the Prefecture of Gironde (the department of which Bordeaux is the capital) was found guilty of helping to organize roundups of Jews, and of arranging train convoys to deport them, has been widely interpreted as a sign that France is finally "facing up to her past", and that worthy legal principles are being consolidated by which to establish individual responsibility for crimes committed by anonymous organizations like state bureaucracies.

The truth, however, is more complicated, and in many respects directly the opposite of this. One French law professor has called the trial "a legal disaster", and its political ramifications may prove disastrous as well.

TO BEGIN at the end: Maurice Papon was sentenced to ten years in prison. While the prosecution may be relieved that he was not acquitted, this sentence was a slap in the face for it. The public prosecutor had demanded twenty years, while many of the civil parties who were also prosecuting Papon in the same trial were calling for life imprisonment. The punishment meted out to Papon for complicity in the most heinous crime this century, if not in the whole history of mankind, is less than you get for armed robbery.

Papon was also acquitted of complicity in murder. Thus on the one hand, a minor provincial official in an occupied country has been placed in the same legal and moral category as a Heydrich or a Himmler, by being convicted of complicity in crimes against humanity; on the other hand, he was found innocent of complicity in murder. This incoherence bodes ill for the legal future of the concept of "crimes against humanity", for it is difficult to see how a crime which is so grave that, uniquely in the French penal code, it has been (retroactively) declared imprescriptible, can lead to anything less than the maximum sentence.

The outcome apart, very significant legal contortions were required to enable the Papon trial to take place at all, so much so that it is doubtful that it would ever have taken place under an Anglo-Saxon system of law in which, unlike that pertaining in France, political pressure is absent. The definition of "crimes against humanity" was changed four times (in 1985, 1992, 1995, and 1997) in order to allow it to be applied to Papon. The last change departed significantly from the definition of the term given at Nuremberg, by declaring that in order to prosecute someone for complicity in crimes against humanity, it was no longer necessary to show that the defendant had subscribed to the ideology of

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the principal actors of the crime. In other words, it was not necessary to show that Papon desired the death of Jews.

So why was Papon prosecuted? There is a whiff of ulterior political motive in the air. The original accusations against him were published in 1981, at an extremely sensitive political moment between the two rounds of the presidential election. François Mitterrand had emerged as the main challenger to Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, whose budget minister was Papon, and the revelation that the incumbent government harbored a man who may have sent Jews to their death helped clinch the Left's subsequent victory.

By contrast, the fate of another, infinitely more compromised Vichy figure was different. René Bousquet, the head of the police under Vichy who negotiated the collaboration between the French police and the SS in the rounding up of Jews, was sentenced after the war to five years' national disgrace. This sentence was immediately overturned by the justice minister, who happened to be none other than his old friend, a certain François Mitterrand. Bousquet then pursued a successful career in banking. As president, Mitterrand did his utmost to prevent Bousquet from coming to trial again.

Perhaps Mitterrand wanted to protect a friend, or perhaps he was afraid that his own then-unknown past as a Vichy government official would come to light in a way he could not control. Whatever Mitterrand's motive, Bousquet was miraculously assassinated just two days before he was indeed finally due to appear in court in 1995. But, in an apparent display of double standards, the advocate-general who helped bring Papon to trial, Marc Robert, and who was one of Papon's most virulent attackers during it, had himself apparently done Mitterrand's bidding and helped to retard the Bousquet trial. As an official in the Justice Ministry in 1991, Robert had written a technical memo giving legal reasons why Bousquet should not be brought to trial.

In other words, there is the suspicion that Papon was pursued at least partly for political reasons. This may be because Papon's own political profile is quite specific. Unlike all the other potential and past French defendants for complicity in crimes against humanity, Maurice Papon is a Gaullist. Indeed, he belongs to the very inner core of the first generation Resistance circles.

As numerous Resistance veterans testified during the trial, and as a Jury of Honour composed of very senior Resistance figures had also testified in 1981, Papon performed services for various Resistance networks during the war (although this was contested by one witness during the trial). As well, he had undertaken other acts—such as hiding an American airman who had been shot down over Bordeaux and helping him escape to Spain—for which the Gestapo would have shot him on the spot had he been caught. Indeed, he claimed (and witnesses corroborated his claim) that the Gestapo wanted to arrest him in 1944.

For these services, Maurice Papon became the only Vichy official in the whole of France to be promoted at the Liberation within the same prefecture he had served in during the Occupation. This was at a time when nearly the entire prefectoral corps was purged of collaborators—even the ones who had been deported by the Nazis were screened on their return—and when there was ample opportunity for the settling of old scores through bogus denunciations. Yet Papon became chief of staff to Gaston Cusin, an arch-*résistant* whom De Gaulle appointed as the new prefect in Bordeaux. Papon was photographed standing next to De Gaulle on the balcony of the prefecture as the general addressed the city in September 1944.

After the war, Papon was a frequent guest at the dinner tables of Resistance heroes, circles that were entirely closed to collaborators. He was also a close friend of the daughter of General Leclerc, the man who liberated Paris. So when De Gaulle returned to power as president in 1958, he appointed Papon prefect of police in Paris, one of the most sensitive posts in the French power

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structure because the politics of France are so often decided in the streets of the capital. The general would only have given it to a man in whom he had absolute confidence.

Maurice Papon's status as a *résistant* explains one of the most astonishing phenomena of this "trial of Vichy": the testimony of numerous very senior Gaullists and Resistance veterans in his defense. They included two former prime ministers, President de Gaulle's own former *chef de cabinet*, and one of the very icons of the Resistance and head of the Académie Française, Maurice Druon, who had composed the movement's anthem. Another *résistant* communicated to the court the conviction of a group of some of its most redoubtable heroes, now dead, that the charges against Papon were absurd. Many of these people testified in this way precisely because they understood that Papon's double status as representative of both Vichy and the Resistance meant that the whole of France would stand condemned if he were convicted.

Indeed, Papon's Resistance activities were at the heart of his partially successful defense. For, contrary to widespread reporting abroad—which seems to owe more to half-remembered platitudes from the Eichmann trial than to any genuine acquaintance with what happened in the Bordeaux Court of Assises between October 1997 and April 1998—Papon's defense was not that he was "just obeying orders." It was instead that he was not responsible for deportations, that he had no powers over the police, and that, on the contrary, he used what power he did have to save Jews—by removing their names from lists, by intervening with the Germans to get individual ones liberated, and by ameliorating the conditions under which they were transported.

Papon claims that he thus saved 139 people, including the sister of one of his prosecutors. In dramatic testimony, the widow of the prefect's chief of staff—who traveled 300 miles to get to Bordeaux, and whom Papon had not seen for half a century—recalled how she and her husband had been terrified that Papon was getting himself into great personal danger by helping Jews. The prosecution, of course, attacked these allegations as bogus.

If it is difficult to see how the trial could even have occurred in a judicial system free from political control, then a conviction of Papon under an Anglo-Saxon legal system seems unimaginable. For the evidence presented to disprove Papon's version of events was either circumstantial, or would have been declared simply inadmissible in a British or American court. For instance, the prosecution dwelt on his alleged brutality while prefect of police in Paris in 1961, events which lay entirely outside the ambit of the trial; and one historian was allowed to give evidence even though he admitted that he knew nothing about Bordeaux under the Occupation and nothing about Papon.

Above all, despite Papon's repeated challenges to the prosecution to provide one single document bearing his signature ordering an arrest of a deportee during the war, it failed to do so. The principal documents produced by the prosecution were either ones of which Papon was not the author (such as notes requisitioning trains, which he signed on the prefect's behalf), or internal administrative minutes, drafted after the events.

Both prosecution and defense thus turned on the question of his real responsibilities as the secretary-general (head of administration) in the Bordeaux prefecture between 1942-44. Papon claimed that powers over the police rested exclusively with the prefect, his boss, and that in any case the Germans often short-circuited the prefecture entirely and operated directly through the French police. Papon says he possessed the right to sign documents in the prefect's name, but that this power of signature did not mean that he had taken the decisions himself. At all times, Papon insisted, the actual process of arrest and internment bypassed him completely. These subtle but important distinctions were rubbished by the prosecution. They were also obscured by some commentators, including Christopher Caldwell in the *Weekly Standard* (May 4, 1998), while others, like Adam Gopnik in the

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New Yorker (April 27 and May 4, 1998), preferred to ridicule them.

As secretary-general, Papon also had the Service of Jewish Questions under his authority in the prefecture. This was a branch of the Commissariat-General for Jewish Questions, which the Vichy government had established in order to administer the anti-Semitic legislation it had passed in 1940 to ban Jews from public life and the media. As the deportations proceeded, the Germans started to use the lists of Jews compiled by the Service for their roundups, although during the trial the defense also insisted that the Germans had their own lists. This thus seemed to incriminate Papon.

However, Papon claimed that his authority over the Service was purely technical, and that for the deportations themselves his subordinate, Pierre Garat, the head of the Service for Jewish Questions, discussed substantial political questions directly with the prefect instead. But above all, Papon insisted, the true responsibility for the deportations lay with the Germans. There were two Gestapo divisions in Bordeaux alone, and the Nazis there had no compunction in shooting three hundred hostages to make their point, just as they massacred entire French villages when Resistance activity was detected.

The prosecution heaped ridicule on the suggestion that Papon was systematically bypassed from above and from below, and despite the lack of clear proof of his guilt, the jury evidently did not quite believe him either. However, on many occasions the prosecution's case seemed to verge on making a different charge, that of failing to help persons in danger. This is a specific crime in France, but it is certainly not one under which charges can be brought fifty-five years after the events.

Another witness who lent credence to Papon's version of events was the historian Michel Bergès. Bergès' testimony was strategically very important for the defense because he had originally been on the prosecution's side. Having been one of the people to unearth the original documents in 1981, he underwent a conversion as his studies advanced. He now argues that, with the benefit of a broader view, it is clear that Papon was merely a conduit of information and not a decisionmaker.

Bergès also emphasized what he called the "massive gaps" in the prosecution file on Papon. Although it comprised a monstrous 30,000 pages, Bergès said, it included no reference to the archives of the prefect (Papon's immediate superior), to those of the German security police, or to those of the executive arm of the Commissariat-General for Jewish Questions that collaborated in roundups. Bergès, who presented himself as a professional student of archives and who witheringly attacked the prosecution for not being so, claimed that the characteristic glitch of one typewriter enabled him to establish with certainty that the police chiefs themselves, although theoretically under the control of the prefecture, were in fact a key part of the decision-making process, acting in direct collusion with the Germans.

DID THE TRIAL perform a worthy historical function? There is much journalistic cant about how it has forced France to "face up to her past." The trial might have performed such a function had it occurred at any time up to 1970, for the deportation of Jews had not been discussed up to that time. But since then the discoveries of active collusion by Vichy with the Nazis have generated an intense interest in the period that continues unabated. French historical work on Vichy has been excellent, and there have even been several feature movies about the period for the wider public. In no sense can the French now be accused of willful ignorance about it.

On the contrary, coverage of Vichy has reached such levels that, by the time of the Papon trial, the pendulum may even have swung in the opposite direction. The perception that Vichy "went beyond German demands" in pursuing anti-Semitism—a phrase that figured in the charge against Papon, and that derives from the seminal work of the

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American historian Robert Paxton—had perhaps begun to obscure a key moral difference between an occupied country and its occupier. The fact that proportionately far fewer Jews were deported to their deaths from France than from any other Nazi-occupied country—some three-quarters of French Jews survived—was also often left out of the equation.

Indeed, if the trial has taught any historical lesson, it is precisely that Vichy officials like Papon did not know that the Jews, unlike most other deportees, were being sent to their deaths. The main prosecuting lawyers in the Papon trial were all in agreement on this point, and even Papon's most violent critics were forced to admit it. Claude Lanzmann, the director of the film *Shoah*, wrote that Papon must have known that the deportees were not being sent away for their own good; but this is very different from knowing they were being sent away to face industrialized mass murder.

Not only did Papon himself not know—he thought they were being sent to prison camps—but he also made the striking claim that if the Vichy administration had known, it would not have collaborated in the deportations either. The Germans maintained the fiction that the Jews were being sent to work camps by requiring them to bring clothes and provisions with them, and as numerous people at the time and since have testified, it was impossible to imagine the brutality to which the Germans would sink. When Jan Karski, a fugitive from the Warsaw ghetto and Belsen, escaped to the United States in 1942 and managed to obtain an audience with Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, the judge listened to his account and then replied, "Sir, I do not think that you are a liar, but I am unable to believe you."

If anything, therefore, the trial may stimulate in some observers a less negative interpretation of the Vichy government than has been prevalent. For although much of the prosecution's case rested on making an amalgam, as Papon himself said, between Papon and the prefect and between Vichy France and Nazi Germany (one of the prosecuting lawyers even compared Papon directly to Eichmann), this vision was undermined by some respectable witnesses.

The most astonishing of these were the Gaullist "barons" referred to earlier. One of them, Jean Bozi, a former member of the private office of an interior minister of De Gaulle, affirmed an old theory that used to be accepted only by hardened old Vichyites, namely that Vichy had shielded France from some of the excesses of the Nazi occupation. Bozi lent credence to Papon's repeated suggestion that it was nobler for him to remain in his post rather than resign, for resignation would have been an easy option.

Another Resistance witness made the suggestion—staggering for a Gaullist—that those who accepted posts in the Vichy administration in order to resist from within may have chosen a better and more difficult path than those who did so from outside. De Gaulle's former chief of staff pointed out that the general's three prime ministers had all been Vichy officials. Also, on the margins of the trial, a highly decorated Resistance veteran who had been deported to Buchenwald published an article in *Le Figaro* asserting that if Vichy had not existed, then the Resistance would have been utterly crushed; the French army in North Africa would never have been reconstituted; and the number of Jews and others deported would have been more than double what it was.

Finally—and perhaps most sensitively—Papon's defense lawyer and one eminent historian of the period established a distinction between the anti-Semitic legislation of Vichy, which was adopted in 1940 without any German pressure, and the Holocaust itself. The prevalent view until now has been that Vichy facilitated the deportation of Jews by passing these laws in 1940, and there certainly are cases of particularly virulent anti-Semites (especially within the Commissariat-General for Jewish Questions) pursuing Jews to the four corners of the country. The worst such offenders were shot at the Liberation. But

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Papon's defense lawyer quoted the Swiss historian Philippe Burrin, who said, "Vichy's policy of exclusion [i.e., of Jews] did not lead to Auschwitz." Segregation, however despicable, is not the same as genocide.

IN SPITE OF all this, however, the outside world is likely simply to take note of the conviction of a former Vichy official for crimes against humanity, and to conclude that Vichy France is morally and legally equivalent to Nazi Germany. Consequently, if Papon's trial was legally anomalous, its political ramifications may be negative as well. This was precisely the danger that the Gaullist veterans sniffed when they rallied to Papon's support. "Who profits from this trial?", railed Maurice Druon last October:

> I'll tell you: Germany, and Germany alone. Tomorrow, Germany will have taken her revenge. Germany is a populous and powerful country which is sure of herself. There is only one thing that can prevent a return of Germany's imperialist demons, and that is the memory of Nazi demons. If we condemn a symbolic Frenchman, it will be easy to say that the French were just as bad. There will be a dilution of blame. It is paradoxical to see the children of the victims of yesterday becoming the accomplices of the children of their executioners.

It would be easy, but very foolish, to dismiss this as the ravings of an elderly French nationalist, determined to put his country's honor above historical truth. Although senior German government officials have expressly denied that they see any dilution of German guilt, at least one German commentator has said that the Germans in general have been watching the Papon trial with *Schadenfreude*. Another German journalist dismissed Druon in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* as belonging to "those circles . . . who hold fast to the life-long lies of the post-war period"—the lies being presumably that France itself is innocent because of its Resistance record—"and who", he added darkly, "are not very European-minded."

There is no doubt, in other words, that Vichy itself, and thus perhaps the whole of France, was on trial. Unlike other Frenchmen found guilty of war crimes, Papon's status as a member of the Resistance, Vichy, and the postwar state administration does make him a symbol of the whole country, Gaullists included, and in some respects his conviction condemns them too. France's leading Nazi hunter, Serge Klarsfeld, who worked hard to get Papon to court, and whose son Arno was one of the leading prosecuting lawyers, certainly believes they should be so condemned. He has himself accused the Resistance of being complicit in the Holocaust because it failed to give priority to fighting the Nazis' anti-Semitic persecutions.

As if to clinch the point, one of the prosecuting lawyers was quoted—in the German press, as it happens—as saying on the day of the conviction that, "An important chapter in our national history has been closed. Now France can turn to the future, which is Europe." And, as if by coincidence, the Papon verdict came on the very same day that a ruling in the German constitutional court gave the green light to European Monetary Union, thus leaving the way clear for the monetary nuptials between France and Germany. But the lawyer's remark presumably means that the postwar settlement, according to which France enjoyed moral superiority over an otherwise more powerful Germany as a result of Germany's war record, is now defunct.

The danger is obviously not that some hitherto unadmitted guilt will now be assumed, but rather that the true guilt—Germany's—will henceforth be conveniently dissipated into the anonymity of "Europe." If so, then other European states are about to adopt not only German monetary practices and institutions, but the German past as well. And if this is its consequence, then it is far from clear that the trial has rendered an appropriate service to historical memory or to modern politics. Instead, it may well have severely jeopardized both. □

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The People Next Door

Australia and the Asian Crisis

Eric Jones

AUSTRALIA IS THE nearest Western country to that great bonfire of the vanities, the Asian crisis. The fear is that it may also be the most combustible.

The extent of Australian dismay at this state of affairs can be understood only by reflecting on how Australia long ago set about repelling influences from Asia and denying its proximity to that continent; how comparatively recent it is that the country woke from its Eurocentric dreamtime; how uncritical fashionable opinion was in proclaiming the new dawn of Australia's intimacy, if not identification, with an emergent and dynamic Asia; and how ambiguous the new relationship has in fact proved to be. A brief recapitulation of some salient features of Australia's history over the last century will aid such understanding.

As Australians moved from being the inhabitants of a collection of colonies to being the citizens of an independent state, a run of shocks—lasting from the depression of the 1890s to the slump of the 1930s—drove in on themselves a people who had once been innovative and enterprising. Among the responses to these events was what historians have dubbed the "Australian Settlement", a tacit pact between labor and capital that institutionalized protectionism, high-wage unionism, and the White Australia policy. Dependence on Pacific Islander and Asian labor was forsworn. Australians schooled themselves to be oblivious to Asia.

Hence the Second World War found Australia thoroughly unprepared for Japan's drive into its backyard, and not solely in terms of material unpreparedness. There were few Australians who knew anything about Asia. As their lives had been devoted to a systematic denial of the fact that their land was located at the southern extremity of Southeast Asia, they were caught flat-footed. Victory in that war made surprisingly little difference to all this. Import substitution in manufacturing was promoted, but the country really lived, in the phrase of the time, "on the sheep's back." Good living standards were sustained by high prices for the minerals and agricultural commodities that Australia exported, notably to Britain. "Asia" remained scarcely more than a string of ports-of-call for P&O liners on the long voyage "home" to Southampton.

Profound awakening came only in the Whitlam years of the early 1970s. Among the many reasons for this was the urge of the young to participate in the radical social and cultural changes then taking place in Britain and the United States. Yet once Britain defected to the shelter of the Common Market in 1973, the only markets that could sustain the Australian economy were in the newly industrializing parts of Asia, notably Japan. Neither of these factors should obscure the genuine liberalization achieved by the

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Australian Labor Party government of Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, who set about reducing tariffs and induced the unions—urban New Class voters were easier to persuade—to abandon remaining elements in the already-eroding White Australia component of the Australian Settlement.

From the mid-1970s on, Asian immigrants began arriving in some numbers, and students in far greater numbers than before, with no significant social friction. Today, one in twenty of the population is of Asian origin. Although older white Australians remain concerned about what they perceive as the unwillingness of Asian immigrants to assimilate, opposition to immigration was not politicized until recently, rising and falling with the rate of unemployment rather than the size of the intake. Australia's large cities became quite happily integrated, as they remain: a 1998 survey of 7,000 fifteen and sixteen year-olds has found fewer than 1 percent willing to express strong racial prejudices. Australian companies switched their trade to such an extent that Japan and South Korea became the country's first and second trading partners. The Asian affiliation of trade became gospel and subsequent Liberal (i.e., conservative) oppositions or governments did not reject it.

Fast forward now to 1991-96, when another Labor prime minister, Paul Keating, decided to make his government the vehicle for a crusade to "Asianize" the country. This campaign was curious. Keating's abrasive style and temperament could scarcely have been further removed from those of Asia's leaders. Nor—as it eventually transpired—could "becoming Asian" and accepting even larger numbers of Asian immigrants have been further from the minds of many older, less-educated, or rural Australians. As this has become clear, fear of an electoral backlash against the intended (or pretended) transfer of cultural allegiance from West to East has had the unintended and ironic effect of putting lead weights in the saddle bags of current policy toward Asia and Asian immigrants.

In reality, Keating's "Asianization" had less to do with the change mooted than with altering the balance of domestic political power. Almost certainly it was a partly heartfelt, partly opportunistic bow to the realities of the region and attractions of the growing markets to which Australia found itself neighbor. Beyond that, the move seems to have been an effort by left-wing city elites to part the country from its English heritage, which is felt to favor conservatism and the conservative political parties. A current example of the same radical project is the Republican movement, which, to judge from the almost laughably unspecific plans put to a Constitutional Convention in February 1998, is also a mixture of negative endeavor—anti-heritage—and elite power play rather than having seriously to do with removing the authority of the English Crown over Australians. Royal power long ago vanished. In similar fashion, as far as "Asianization" went, no one ever described in detail what was intended, and it is indicative that few who rode the bandwagon bothered to learn a single Asian language. If the program was, as I believe, more façade than reality, it would be easy to replace in its turn, though a full retreat from engagement with Asia is unlikely. Australia's alternatives to Asian markets are limited, and, after all, these markets have contracted, not collapsed. Beyond economics, too, there is no possibility of extrication from strategic involvement with the region.

The Paradox of Australian Culture

CULTURAL LINKS are separate from trade links and herein lies the greatest Australian paradox. As some Asian leaders continued to insist, even during the Keating years, Australia's culture derives ineradicably from Britain, Europe, and the United States. Indeed, links with the rest of the West are likely to increase rather than dwindle in the immediate future—this because of the irony that, just when "Asianization"

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became the cry, the Internet and e-mail started to put Australia into instantaneous contact with the other English-speaking countries, dethroning the famous "tyranny of distance" that had hitherto dominated Australian history and constructing a new bridge back to the old homes of Western culture.

This bridge is the stronger in that the Australian uptake of new technologies is exceptionally rapid. Australians are among the world's heaviest users of the Internet and supply a disproportionately large share of editors of web sites. (According to *The Economist*, Australia is fourth from top of the list for Internet hosts per capita, after Finland, Norway, and the United States.) Meanwhile the costs of other forms of communication have been dropping too. The real price of airfares has come down far more than most prices, meaning that Sydney and Melbourne have to all intents and purposes shifted closer to London and Los Angeles. "Asianization" was in any case never a plausible option for a population whose historical referents are European, and whose social manner is the opposite of the reticence typical, or at least stereotypical, of Asians.

Certainly, increased cultural exchange with Asia is now taking place, and many educated young Australians are equally intrigued by Asia and the West. But strident official Asianization is another matter. In the "bush" and smaller towns it has been rejected—wrongly, because immigrants were seen as a threat to jobs, but understandably, in that the campaign was trumpeted by a condescending city elite. This rejection was nastily signaled by the election of a populist politician, Pauline Hanson, to federal parliament in 1996. For months no newspaper or broadcast was complete without reference to Hanson and her views that Aborigines receive preferential treatment and Asian immigrants are taking jobs from Australians. The advent of openly racist politics stunned the defeated Keating government and the media, both of whom had been unaware or contemptuous of opinion in the bush. Although media comment was almost uniformly hostile to Hanson, the publicity exaggerated the extent of Australian racism and fueled extremes of Australia-bashing in the Asian press. Into this embroilment fell the publication of Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996). The fury with which Australian journalists greeted his characterization of Australia as a "torn country", attempting unavailingly to decamp from one civilization and join another, showed that there was enough truth in it to sting.

Paradoxes of Business Behavior

"ASIAN VALUES" were often admired during the Keating years—more often than not the wrong Asian values, those of an imposed consensus fronting for authoritarianism, rather than those of a slowly emerging democratic Asia. The corporatism of the then-prosperous Asian Tigers was seized on by business commentators eager to weave a closer mesh with government at home. Business was inclined to believe that Asian governments cleared obstacles from the path of commerce and altogether favored industry in a way that Australian governments were willfully ignoring. The spin put on the links between Australia and its neighbors also served to obscure rather than clarify what was really happening. Government often spoke of trade with Asia as if it had the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) countries principally in mind; yet the bulk of trade was with the Northeast, that is, with Japan, South Korea, and increasingly the Chinese Economic Area. Again, for all the talk of economic integration with Asia-Pacific countries, as soon as capital flows were liberalized businesses actually *decreased* the share of their investment in the region. They traded with Asia but they invested in the United Kingdom and Europe, the United States, and New Zealand. As recently as 1995, whereas over 60 percent of Australian exports went to Northeast and Southeast Asia, over 50 percent of overseas investment was still

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going to the United States, Britain, and New Zealand, and a mere 7.5 percent to the countries of ASEAN.

The direction of overseas investment was surprising, even astonishing, given the hoopla about profits to be made in Asia. Even as their money was heading toward London and New York, business leaders were asserting that Australia had to be in Asia because returns on investments were supposed to be well above those of mature Western markets. To be sure, investment did shift over time toward East Asia because the Asian "miracle" continued so spectacularly. Australia is in any case prone to much the same enthusiasms as the United States; indeed, as the smaller country it tends to import them across the Pacific. In addition it has generated its own "New China lobby" of former politicians, assorted bureaucrats, and ex-diplomats, who exploit the contacts they made when in the service of the public in a manner familiar to Americans but hitherto rare in Australia. There are even lobbyists for trade with Burma. More broadly, the whole discussion of the subject is characterized by a degree of self-censorship with respect to candid opinions about negative features of Asian society. In the circumstances, then, the continued westward flow of so much investment has been surprising.

My sense of why this has been so, based on discussions about particular deals, is that many firms have found it hard to assess risk in cultures of which they have scant experience and whose languages only a rare executive or board member can speak—cultures in which *guanxi* (personal connections) govern commercial relations, bribery is so commonplace it is not seen as wrong, and the lack of independent law means that contracts ultimately rest on access to government. Dispatching or receiving consignments of goods is one thing, investing is another. Mature markets in the Anglo-Saxon countries may not have promised such glittering rewards, but the institutions were familiar and the courts were trusted.

A number of firms did plunge into Asia. Some made money but others did not, shrugging this off with brave talk of being in it for the long haul and the desirability of doing business in the personalized Asian way, by slowly forging relationships with influential people. As time passed, more joined in. Australian business is thus significantly implicated in the financial crisis, with an unknown but clearly embarrassing volume of loans and assets now at risk. Of course, losses of all kinds will be laid at Asia's door for the foreseeable future, since, as Christopher Lingle has quipped, the Asian crisis is the El Niño of economic life, a vent for all blame whatever its true cause. Luckily in this instance, many Australian companies were characteristically slow to move, so that their shared pain may turn out to be less than that suffered by more alert and quick-off-the-mark companies from distant Western lands. Australian banks, by and large, seem likely to suffer smaller write-offs than the more eager among their European counterparts.

"By and large" is used advisedly. The fog surrounding the Asian crisis is pierced by the gleams of many dubious statistics but very few genuinely illuminating ones. The most exposed of the larger Australian banks is the ANZ, which may be used to illustrate the level of uncertainty. The general manager of its chief executive division acknowledges estimates of exposure ranging from $A100 million to $A400 million. Differing accounting conventions and assumptions about the likelihood of repayments mean that a single, scientifically guaranteed figure is not likely to be shrouded in the murk, for such a figure does not really exist. After all, even between Australia and the United States accounting practices vary substantially; between Australian methods and the opaqueness of many Asian companies they differ much more, with as yet unknown implications.

Markets reflect expectations and prices vary with degrees of confidence. With each passing day articles appear in the press contending that there will be a gloomy outcome

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in East Asia or promising easy pickings followed by rapid recovery. In such a data void, and given the political houses-of-cards involved, categorical statements remind one of the remark, supposedly after Groucho Marx, that the one thing in life that matters more than all else is sincerity—"and if you can fake that, you've got it made."

The Formation of Opinion

HOW DID THE WORLD slither into such a confusion of opinion? Some Australian voices, such as those of Helen Hughes (late of the World Bank and the Australian National University) and Prudential Bache's Anna Borzi, issued clear warnings about Asian economic or banking problems back in April 1997. But contrarian voices like theirs were drowned out by the euphoric roar of the marketplace and the insouciance of a government keen on recommending business to enter this one favored region.

Australia is a smallish country, its brashness more a matter of style than of genuine nonconformity. This has implications for the way business, or at any rate large businesses, responded to Asia and may respond in future. Many businesspeople scorned the notion of political risk and were impatient with the inevitably tentative manner in which advice on the subject was offered. For many older businessmen, "academic" is still a term of derision. Thus all too little homework has been done and too much reliance has been placed on the "Grand Tour" as a means of surveying markets: executives making occasional forays into the region, talking to, believing, and then acting on the advice of local contacts and their company's representatives on the spot.

Late into 1997 they were still receiving assurances that the fundamentals were sound, whereas anyone with a sense of Asian history and institutions could see that for the most part they were archaic and rickety. There is little evidence that business went out of its way to solicit countervailing opinions, certainly not the opinions of academics and other specialists outside the ranks of technical economists, who (it now transpires) were relying on late-appearing and comically understated official figures of foreign investment. High volumes of investment—simply what other people were doing—were actually taken as justifying confidence in the market. Unsound conclusions were likewise drawn from high rates of GDP growth, without closely considering how these might translate into profits for Western investors.

Contacts with local Cassandras would not only have been temperamentally uncongenial to senior businesspeople visiting Asia, but would have had the added and serious drawback of irritating authoritarian governments with contracts on offer. It is also true, as we have seen, that businesses from other Western countries, especially banks, were as or more imprudent in not listening to warnings about risk and in relying on inadequate research. The Chicago analyst David Hale is right in saying that the bankers who lent so much to Asia were "unsophisticated" and showed an obsession with "statistical quantification at the expense of other factors which influence credit quality such as history, politics, sociology, and culture." But he is not right in saying that this constitutes a "great mystery." For one thing, it is quite of a piece with the history of boom-and-bust investment in all emerging markets. (The only difference in this instance was the scale and duration of the East Asian upturn, which made the downturn all the more humiliating.) For another, many of the bankers and fund managers are very young. If they studied anything at university pertinent to their work, it was economics—during a period when academic economists have been stripping nonmathematical subjects from the curriculum, thereby robbing their students of the kinds of vicarious experience and knowledge of context that a broad education used to give.

According to Derek Fatchett, foreign office minister of state in Britain, the European Union is particularly exposed to

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the crisis, its banks having lent over $50 billion in 1996 to what he calls "emerging East Asia." This is more than the exposure of American and Japanese banks combined, and vastly more than that of Australian banks. But again, I am inclined to attribute any restricted exposure by larger Australian firms less to better foresight than to their characteristic slowness off the mark; they were saved by one of their weaknesses. Surveys find Australian managers to be worse prepared than American, German, or Japanese managers dispatched to Southeast Asia; they perform less well and not as many last the full term of their postings. Whereas Japanese expatriate managers stay on foreign postings for an average of four years and fewer than 5 percent fail, Australians last on average under two years and 30 percent fail (*The Australian*, May 14, 1996). Australia may be physically close to Asia but the cultural gap is still wide, so much so that there are specialized consultancies advising on how to recover from elementary errors in dealing with Asian firms.

This relative incapacity of some major Australian corporations to go international is suggested by data on the composition of boards of directors. Piecing together the few available comparative figures reported in studies by David Uren and John Onto we find that only 28 percent of the boards of public companies include a woman, compared with 69 percent in the United States, and an infinitesimally small percentage include either a member of a racial minority (51 percent in the United States) or a foreign national (17 percent in the United States). Looking more closely at large companies with at least 10 percent of their assets offshore, only 7 percent of board members are foreign nationals, and these include New Zealanders. There is little diversity even within Australia: 67 percent of directors reside in the city in which their company is headquartered. The chairman of one major company told Onto, "If I had my choice, all members of my board would be from Melbourne."[1]

The market has now realized that the local culture of "mateship" may dull the response of the top end of town to the crisis. The search is on for American executives to run Australian companies. "The current wave of executive replacements", declares the *Australian Financial Review*, "marks the failure of Australian management culture."

The Third Australia

THE EARLIER economy of Australia referred to at the beginning of this essay—the Australia of the "Settlement"—was dominated by big business and big unions. Fortunately there is now an increasingly important third Australia—the universe of small and medium-sized enterprises, in comparison with which the cluster of big corporations in downtown Sydney and Melbourne can look like Jurassic Park. The last twenty-five years, during which tariffs were reduced, higher education expanded, and immigrants admitted from all destinations, have gone a long way to rejuvenate the smug society of the Australian Settlement. Historically, Australians were handy, adaptable people. Less regulation, new markets, and reinforcement by immigrants, whose children tend to perform well academically, have now revived some of that spirit. One-third of small business operators were born overseas, 50 percent more than the proportion of immigrants in the population. The country remains an excess producer of scientific knowledge. Singapore's expressed wish that young Australians move there and share their creativity is a particular irony, given its previous criticisms of Western culture and patronizing comments about Australia by some of its politicians. It

[1]John Onto and Christopher Thomas, *Corporate Governance and Globalising Business: Reconciling Competing Pressures* (Melbourne: Melbourne Business School, 1997); David Uren, "Anemic boards need new blood", *The Australian*, March 7, 1998.

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testifies to the vitality of Australian intellectual life, just as the business start-ups testify to its underlying commercial vitality.

Australia's service sector has greatly expanded. I have already alluded to the interest in information technology, an industry for the young if ever there was one. Financial industries are set to remake themselves in the wake of further deregulation recommended last year by the Wallis Committee. The banking system contains plenty of expertise. Asian banks, such as Sime Bank in Malaysia, have been eager to acquire credit risk managers on secondment from Australia, while the Bank of Bangkok has been hiring them away from Australia. Approximately $1 billion of flight capital came into Australia from Indonesia during the last five weeks of 1997.

Far from being the "convict dustbin" of Southeast Asian journalistic hyperbole, Australia is firmly governed, political opponents are not legally hounded, there is a proper apparatus of contract law, and a free, if rather faddish, press. Whatever the surviving patches of arthritis in big business and big labor (which is currently fiercely resisting radical reform of the waterfront), Australia is one of the countries in the world where it is precisely the fundamentals that *are* sound. Foreign firms are interested in acquiring its resource companies and thereby gaining entry to low-risk exploration in Australian territorial waters—meaning low political risk. This is the feature that has attracted to Sydney the Asia-Pacific regional headquarters of multinational corporations, and will now attract more. There is a fair chance that the Australian economy will become more adaptable than it has ever been, though of course many obstacles remain and the Asian crisis has undoubtedly intensified some of them.

Economic Dangers

THE ECONOMIC dangers that the current crisis holds for Australia are the same as for other Western countries, but in some ways more so: diminished profits, currency turmoil, and a shrinkage of markets so recently represented as limitless. The contradictory prognostications about likely losses during the remainder of 1998 are understandable but nevertheless so extreme as to make one question, once again, how much knowledge many companies ever possessed about the markets into which they entered.

Even if we suppose, for the sake of argument, that the losses do prove to be bearable, growth will be slowed for a while. The Aussie dollar is so dependent on regional trade that it must remain exposed to further shocks. South Korea and Japan hold much of the key: a resource-exporting economy like Australia's, versatile though its other parts are, cannot quickly replace these markets. And even if the South Korean economy does recover by means of IMF help and Kim Dae Jung's reformism, Japan is a much less tractable problem because of the unresponsiveness of its political system to the corruption of its bankers.

Domestic demand in Australia has been high during the early part of 1998 and this has provided some cushion—but it is a cushion from which the air has already begun to leak. The rate of growth in GDP was 3.3 percent in 1997; leading authorities forecast it at the end of March 1998 as heading for 3.2 percent this year. But that is a hope; others expect the Asian crisis to shave off as much as a percentage point. The estimates rely on so many assumptions that all forecasts are more than ordinarily doubtful. They have been scaled down and down over the past months. The forecasters failed so dismally to predict the start of the crisis that it would surely be foolish to put much faith in them now. If some of them do prove right this time, one has to be sure—as one needs to be with stock market wizards—that this is because their predictive models are robust, rather than just because their luck happens to be in.

Ahead lie even greater, or at any rate more perverse hazards, though they are ones that could be avoided given the political will to do so. Thus if Australia is foolish enough to

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listen to its own siren voices, it may yet revert to the false safety of protectionism. Fear of overseas competition provides an excuse for mercantilists and rent-seekers to demand shelter or subsidy at the expense of the taxpayer. Loud calls for such transfer payments are already to be heard, amid signs that the present Liberal-National (i.e., conservative) government is becoming more inclined to buy off special interests. In 1997, as the Asian crisis reinforced populist support for handouts to industry, the government encouraged this pork-barreling by commissioning "reports" on particular industries from committees headed by businessmen. These reports invariably speak up for "industry assistance" on the grounds of creating jobs or attracting investment to Australia, without serious consideration of well-known findings that the net effects are best described as corporate welfare. Hence the automobile industry has received support, the information technology industry has made its case, and the chemicals industry is in the process of bringing up its heavy artillery. A country that seemed to have shaken off its inwardness, and where a consensus had arisen about letting tariffs and other distortions evaporate, is showing that it had never forgotten whereabouts on the shelf the old bottle of nostrums is kept.

The Wider Picture

IT IS THESE indirect effects of the crisis that Australia has most to fear, since they will drag down adjustment and impede self-help. The gurus of nationalist, centralist, and interventionist projects are becoming vocal worldwide. The greatest danger of all would be a return to protectionism in the United States. Congress is not thought to be tender toward America's allies. That one-third of the congressmen of Madeleine Albright's "indispensable nation" are said not to possess a valid passport is worrying. It smacks, if not of isolationism, then certainly of insularity and parochialism. One can almost sympathize with the writer in the left-wing British *Guardian Weekly* who said that "Non-U.S. citizens should be allowed to vote in U.S. elections, as their outcome affects us almost as much as it affects the Americans."

The probability that the United States really will close its shutters in response to particular trade deficits may be low, but it cannot be said to be negligible. Even a partial blockage to imports would create a loud implosion in the Asia-Pacific region. As a regional country much more dependent on trade, especially Asian trade, than the vast American market, Australia would be deafened.

At the heart of the Asian crisis were incautious extremes of investment by Western businesses in countries that lack the political safeguards and afford little of the security expected in mature economies. What is now hoped for, and IMF requirements are directed to bringing about, is the modernization of societies that got rich too fast to develop checks and balances like those hard won in the West. Until its institutions modernize, Asia will remain less sound than the Western democracies; its markets will, or should, incur a risk premium. And a return to another twenty or thirty years' stability will once more be a mirage if again it depends on authoritarian rule.

Meanwhile, Australia perches alongside the crisis zone, with a detonation more likely in Indonesia than anywhere. The strategic dangers face policymakers with an acute dilemma, which can be summed up as how much to bet on the Indonesian regime. Other strategic problems are evident, above all how much the regional sway of China may increase if its economy continues to escape the troubles that are weakening its smaller neighbors—in short, whether at least some of China's neighbors will be Finlandized. But Indonesia is closer to Australia and already in a calamitous state. At the time of writing it is uncertain whether it will convulse and in so doing throw the Suharto family off its back. If it were to do so, what type of regime might follow is utterly unclear. Where interactions between politics and economics are con-

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cerned, the inconclusiveness becomes multiplicative, not additive.

Many economists believe that for Indonesia to regain its growth path, IMF-style reforms are definitely required. They seem surprised that the regime is maneuvering to retain its privileges when these are so obviously costly for the country, both via the direct exercise of monopolies and the indirect damage that shilly-shallying does to investor confidence. "Monopolies are acceptable if they are in the public interest", says "Bob" Hasan, one of Suharto's closest associates. He does not say that the public will be permitted to decide. In the opinion of an Indonesian politician, "fellow countries" should provide economic assistance but must not interfere in "domestic affairs", which means paying up but keeping quiet about how the funds supplied are actually distributed and used.

There is no feasible prospect that institutions will adjust without teeth-grinding pain, and in the course of change, or without enough change to bring investment back in, society may be destabilized. The whole region is so fragile that destabilization may yet happen in a number of countries. If it does, some of the blame (for action or inaction) will undoubtedly end up at the door of the IMF and Western countries. Anti-Western resentment has surfaced in Malaysia, South Korea, and Thailand, as well as Indonesia. Opportunistic remarks by China have rubbed salt in the wounds. Western firms buying in at fire-sale prices will help regional economies by injecting scarce expertise, but this is not how the intervention will be depicted: rather it will be portrayed as the arrival of the vultures.

The Australian authorities well know that IMF-style reforms are vital but they do not relish being seen to be closely involved, since, even if the reforms succeed, Asian countries will experience severe pain. They seek, therefore, to put a distance between Australia's role and the approach of the IMF-cum-United States. They are disinclined to embrace the Suharto regime in the almost unconditional fashion of the previous prime minister, Keating (who has now come out with a strong defense of Suharto, with whom he formed close personal ties while in office). Nevertheless, because Australia fears the collapse of order in Indonesia and the replacement of the Suharto regime by one that is conspicuously anti-Western, it cannot fail to support that regime *pro tem*, while being ready to switch allegiance should there be a breakdown. This means interceding with the IMF and the Clinton administration to soften the terms of the rescue package, hoping for reform measures that have a better chance of actually being adopted and of bearing less hard on the unemployed multitudes. Even the governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia, Ian Macfarlane, has overcome his initial reluctance and is pressing the suit of support for the Indonesian currency.

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world, with a population of two hundred million. All officers of rank are Muslim. Islamic observances have grown among the urban middle classes who benefited from the years of economic growth, which is surprising to most Western intellectuals who expect modernization to lead to secularism. The national airline Garuda, now busy decommissioning planes, has in recent years needed to hire whole fleets of aircraft to convey pilgrims to Mecca. Although Indonesia's is not a fierce or fundamentalist version of Islam, a new regime, born out of the ashes of the crisis, might nevertheless prove xenophobic and form alliances unfavorable to Western interests.

No one anticipates the invasion of Australia or even an uncontrollable wave of refugees; with reason, Singapore and Malaysia express greater worries on that score. For all that, a destabilized Indonesia would put pressure on the Australian dollar, require higher taxes for defense spending, and conceivably threaten access to markets further north in Asia. The blocking of north-south routes through the Indonesian archipelago is a particular Australian fear—and it is perhaps worth recalling that in the 1970s Indonesia

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was bold enough to depth-charge a Russian submarine passing through its waters. Another fear is that a hostile regime might close the Malacca Straits, the choke-point of trade between East Asia and the Persian Gulf and Europe. Strategic anxieties are shared by American opinion, too. The commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific indicated this in a February lecture at the Royal United Services Institute in London, when he observed that "the word 'amok' is a Malay word. Indonesians will riot at the drop of a hat." Military and government sources in Australia may not comment in such terms but a recently leaked Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade paper was blunt about the deceit with which the Suharto regime is handling IMF requirements. The crisis is a testing time for diplomats.

Australia is closer to the epicenter than the United States and has more to lose because far more of its trade is with the countries most affected by the crisis. At the strategic level, officialdom fully appreciates what Australians long denied, that the country is geographically part of the Asia-Pacific region. It is less clear how determined Australian businesses will be in future in pursuing their plans for investing in the region, let alone in seeking new opportunities. Some will remain active but others will exhibit withdrawal symptoms, the more acute in that the crisis follows so closely on gilded expectations. Some companies may diversify away from Asia, perhaps moving into Latin America. Government is obviously more constrained. Official policy has to cope with strategic realities. The policymakers have little choice. They have to continue their edgy walk around a disaster area closer to home than the current generation of Australians has ever known. And they have to do so aware that, as the "tyranny of distance" is diminishing, so is the protective belt that distance provided in the past. □

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Over the last few months, there has been a flood of columns and essays about the lessons of Asia's economic woes. As far as I can tell, all the pundits draw the same central lesson: whatever they thought before about the way the world works, whatever economic doctrine is identified with their names—the crisis proves that they were right. . . . There are no licensing requirements for economic commentators. . . . More important, economics is for the most part not the kind of discipline in which you can do an experiment that settles an issue beyond all dispute. . . . All that we have are the lessons of history--lessons that are often positively Delphic in their obscurity. But even when history might seem to be speaking loud and clear, it is no match for the ingenuity of modern punditry, which can turn any event—no matter how much it may seem, on the surface, to contradict what the pundit was saying a few months ago—into an occasion for triumphant self-congratulation.

— *Paul Krugman,* New York Times Magazine, *May 3, 1998*

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Elegy for a Contrarian

Scott McConnell

AFTER ENOCH Powell's death in February, at the age of eighty-five, he received the kind of broad-based acclaim from the British establishment never offered during the key battles of his lifetime, and denied him most particularly during the pivotal half dozen years after 1968, when he was expelled from the Tory leadership only to emerge as Britain's foremost "nationalist" politician. Thirty years later Paul Johnson wrote that save for Churchill and Margaret Thatcher, Powell would be the most remembered British political figure of the century. He probably has no equal in capacity to provoke argument. Barely two months after his death, the BBC's Channel Four put on the screen "The Trial of Enoch Powell"—a disparaging program whose very production nonetheless signaled the extent of Powell's pull on the public imagination.

Since he held no office higher than a minor ministry in an unremarkable Harold Macmillan cabinet, such appreciation was testament, certainly, to the extraordinary influence Powell accumulated entirely through the spoken and written expression of his ideas. But it was also an acknowledgment, more tacit than openly stated, that the issues for which Powell stood and fought—ones revolving around Britain's sovereignty and identity—remain as unsettled, vital, and potentially explosive as ever.

He was brilliant, a rare intellectual in politics. A scholarship boy from Birmingham who won all the classics prizes at Cambridge, Powell was named to a full professorship at the University of Sydney at the unprecedented age of twenty-five. During the war, which he spent mainly in North Africa and India doing intelligence work, he rose from the rank of private to brigadier general, the only soldier to make such a progression. Out of the army he entered politics as a Conservative and in 1950 won a seat in Wolverhampton, a largely lower-middle class city in the industrial midlands, not far from his birthplace. In Parliament he soon made his mark as his party's most forceful advocate of free markets, always ready to heap pointed derision on economic planning and escalating levels of public spending: a position quite at odds with the bipartisan Tory/Labour consensus—the so-called Butskellism—of the 1950s and 1960s.[1]

Powell's character was unusual for a politician. He was very much a loner, and had more than his share of quirkiness. He also possessed unmatched powers of concentration and a will to pursue matters to their ends. (His work in 1949 on a research brief on House of Lords reform, for example, culminated in his co-authorship, eighteen years

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[1]The term referred to that compromising, evasive, and muddled approach to political affairs, adopted by both parties in the 1950s and 1960s, and described by an elision of the names of the Conservative Rab Butler and Labour's Hugh Gaitskell. It implied a corporatist approach to economic and social problems.

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later, of a massive scholarly tome, *The House of Lords in the Middle Ages*.) Though deeply patriotic, Powell was never a conservative jingoist, and early in his career became one of Parliament's voices of conscience against British mistreatment of prisoners suspected of terrorism during Kenya's Mau Mau uprising.

With his great talents, Powell progressed rapidly upward through his party's ranks, and his principled resignation as a junior minister in 1958 over a matter of budget policy did him little harm. By the beginning of 1968, he was firmly established in the small circle of Tory leaders, the defense spokesman in Edward Heath's shadow cabinet. Had he stayed on course and played the game in orthodox fashion, it is quite likely that the party would have turned to him rather than the little-known Margaret Thatcher after Heath's defeat in 1974. But orthodoxy was not his forte.

A SINGLE POWELL speech, delivered before eighty-five members of a Birmingham Conservative club on a Saturday afternoon in April 1968, changed everything. In taking up the question of "colored immigration", Powell plunged into an issue that most politicians were careful to ignore. Evasiveness had begun as early as 1948, after the Labour Party's British Nationality Act gave 800 million former subjects of the dissolving empire (renamed the "New Commonwealth") the right of residence in the United Kingdom. When a steamer with 492 West Indians arrived that summer, it began to dawn on some British politicians that reduced transportation costs had opened up entirely new vistas of migration. As the flow picked up speed through the 1950s, a handful of Tory ministers grumbled and tried to prod the government to action. Churchill said measures would be taken when popular opinion was sufficiently aroused—which meant that nothing would be done while the immigrant totals were relatively small.

In 1953 a Civil Service report was commissioned, drafted (with a bluntness about perceived racial and cultural differences unimaginable in the present day), and circulated in the Cabinet, but it underestimated the future immigrant flow, and cautioned against any restriction that might "antagonize liberal opinion." The Conservative governments of the 1950s, committed to what has been described as a "Peace at any Price" policy of accommodation toward the trade unions, remained allergic to strong stands in nearly all policy realms, and immigration in those years was limited by nothing more than the expense of travel from the former colonies. By the mid-1950s, the burgeoning civil rights movements in the United States and South Africa had begun to loom over race-related discussions in Britain—one more reason for hesitation. The annual New Commonwealth immigrant flow surpassed 50,000, then 100,000, and was approaching 200,000 by 1962, when the Tories finally pushed through a significant modification against Labour Party opposition, giving entry rights only to immigrants with specific job offers or needed skills, together with their dependents.

The new law still allowed a considerable influx, mainly from the West Indies and the Indian subcontinent. By 1968 total postwar immigration numbered roughly 1.25 million, and was concentrated in a few urban districts (including Powell's). They were little noticed in the rest of the country. Still, by the mid-1960s, back benchers representing affected areas were beginning to complain. They got no support from party leaders: immigration was still not felt to be a pressing national issue, a perception that would now be undone by a single speech.

Powell began that speech quietly enough:

> The supreme function of statesmanship is to provide against preventable evils. . . . [But] people are disposed to mistake predicting troubles for causing troubles and even desiring troubles. . . . The discussion of future grave but with effort now avoidable evils is the most necessary occupation for the politician.

Then Powell proceeded to launch a bomb. He started by relating a conversation with a con-

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stituent who voiced the stark (and quite unrealistic) racial fear that in a generation "the black man will have the whip hand over the white man."

"How dare I say such a horrible thing? How dare I stir up trouble by repeating such a conversation?" Powell asked.

> The answer is that I do not have the right not to do so. Here is a decent ordinary fellow Englishman who in broad daylight in my own town says to me, his Member of Parliament, that this country will not be worth living in for his children. I simply do not have the right to shrug my shoulders and think about something else.

He then went on to numbers. Both then and subsequently, Powell insisted that Britain could assimilate immigrants from any race or creed, provided their levels were manageable. But at then current rates of entry, by 1988 there would be 3.5 million New Commonwealth immigrants and they would be concentrated in several urban areas. Powell then read from a letter sent by relatives of an elderly English landlady tormented by immigrant toughs in a Birmingham neighborhood that had undergone a rapid demographic transformation, and noted that the Race Relations Act pushed by the Labour government of the day would give the new peoples tools to "organize and consolidate their members, agitate and campaign against their fellow citizens."

To see Britain take in 50,000 immigrant dependents annually, he maintained, "is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre." Then, in a passage that was to become perhaps the most controversial uttered by any politician in the second half of the twentieth century, he concluded,

> As I look ahead I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman I seem to see 'the river Tiber foaming with much blood.' The tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic, which there is interwoven with the history and existence of the States itself, is coming here by our own volition and our neglect. . . . All I know is that to see and not to speak would be the great betrayal.

Powell's Birmingham audience was not in the least shocked. But the national press, with an advance copy of the text, recognized that such words from a figure of Powell's eminence were political dynamite. By the next day, a Sunday, reports of the "rivers of blood" speech ran on every front page and led every television news bulletin. That evening, Heath consulted with Tory leaders and then curtly dismissed Powell from the shadow cabinet. On Monday an editorial in the *Times* denounced "An Evil Speech" and most other papers followed suit.

Then something remarkable happened: While the political and journalistic elite were closing ranks against Powell, a great section of the people rallied to him. By Tuesday he had received 45,000 letters from every part of Great Britain. The overwhelming majority lauded Powell (generally in temperate and non-racist language); many swore that he was the only politician in Britain willing to tell the truth. Every immigration officer at Heathrow signed a petition backing Powell. On Tuesday, thousands of dock workers rallied outside Parliament in his support, and national opinion polls began to record landslide margins (between 67 and 82 percent) favoring him.

Thus was born "Powellism"—the phenomenon of a man stripped of his party post, kept at a distance by most Tory colleagues in Parliament, vilified by the prestige press, but who nevertheless emerged for a time as Britain's most popular political figure. The tumultuous aftermath of a single speech demonstrated beyond any doubt that the establishment consensus on New Commonwealth immigration was not even remotely shared by the British people, who had suddenly found the most eloquent man in Parliament to voice their feelings.

Powell resisted entreaties (and offers of funds) to form his own party or Tory faction; indeed, he seldom returned to the immigra-

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tion issue though he would be linked to it for the rest of his life. When he did, in several speeches and televised forums in the next few years, he did not retreat an inch, and as a result the issue got the kind of thorough intellectual going over that it hadn't received before or since in any Western country. Powell mocked the *Times* editors who denounced as "fantasies of racial purity" the idea that a child born of English parents in Beijing was not Chinese but English, and that a child born of Indian parents in Birmingham was not English but Indian. He sparred with Anglican bishops who maintained that only by allowing a generous flow of immigrants could white Britons have the chance to become true Christians. He heard a candidly elitist formulation (from Auberon Waugh) that New Commonwealth immigrants should be welcomed because they would make Britain a less egalitarian society. And he never flinched from drawing on all the power latent in the English language to drive home his points.

He could, at times, go too far. Commenting in the early 1970s on the growing immigrant stream produced by arranged marriages between British Indians and families on the Subcontinent, Powell said:

> It is by 'black power' that the headlines are caught and under the shape of the Negro that the consequences for Britain of immigration and what is miscalled 'race' are popularly depicted. Yet it is more truly when he looks into the eyes of Asia that the Englishman comes face to face with those who will dispute with him possession of his native land.

Given the size of Asian immigration at the time Powell spoke these words, such a statement was belligerent to the point of recklessness.

Due in great part to Powell, immigration to Britain was to stay relatively small. Powellism put Britain's political class on notice about popular attitudes, and while Heath and other leading Tories regularly derided Powell for his "tone", they edged toward his positions. Speaking the next year before the same Birmingham political club as Powell had addressed, Heath talked of getting down to "brass tacks" on immigration—and proceeded to spell out proposals that made it sound as if in the future a native of Bombay would be able to get more easily to the moon than to Birmingham. In 1973 a Heath-led Parliament tightened the laws of entry. In 1978 a still untried opposition leader Margaret Thatcher spoke of the need for yet more restrictions, telling a radio audience that without reforms Britain would have four million people—"an awful lot"—from the New Commonwealth and Pakistan. She added, "the British character has historically done so much for democracy, for law, and done so much throughout the world" and it was understandable that people feared it might be "swamped by people with a different culture." She was condemned, of course, but rose in the polls, and in 1981 her government did pass further restrictions. Because of Powellism, contemporary Britain is less multiracial and multicultural than it would have been otherwise. Powell always maintained that smaller numbers would facilitate assimilation, and Britain today, while hardly free of racial strife, is more residentially integrated and has more intermarriage between people of different groups than the United States.

POWELL DID NOT win his other great battle with the Tory leadership, the one over British entry into "Europe." After 1968 he was skirmishing with Heath along a wide front, endorsing the Tories in 1970, breaking with them in 1974 and refusing to run for his seat. (Such was Powell's influence that, in the opinion of some good judges, his words probably swung both elections; he later returned to Parliament to represent a Northern Ireland district as an Ulster Unionist.) In the early 1970s he lambasted Heath's management of the economy and his drawing Britain into the European Economic Community. He frequently traveled to the Continent to speak against Britain's entry into the EEC, doing so in fluent French, German, and Italian (while most of the "pro-Europe"

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British politicians could only mangle a few strangled phrases in those languages). He stressed that British sovereignty could be expressed only through its Parliament: joining Europe would render Britain subject to bureaucrats who "know nothing of the political rights and liberties that we have so long taken for granted."

But despite considerable Labour Party support, the anti-EEC campaign tended to veer off into arcane issues of tariffs and agricultural prices, and never penetrated the popular consciousness the way immigration had done. Powell worried that the British middle classes were rallying to the EEC because it was pro-capitalist, a buffer against Britain's left-wing unions. He dreaded a Tory party that was becoming "a party of class and not of nation", and in his last decades in Parliament his nationalism took clear precedence over the free market advocacy that had been a feature of his earlier political life (characteristically, when it had been very unpopular).

This overriding concern with the idea of the nation was hardly typical of political leaders of the postwar West. De Gaulle (whom Powell admired) was perhaps the only other major figure who shared it. When this French statesman said that the nation-state and democracy were the same thing, he was making the fundamental point that people who do not feel themselves part of the same nation as their fellow citizens will not readily accept the verdicts of democracy when majorities go against them. Such an idea underlay Powell's arguments against Britain's entry into "Europe"; but there is much in it for Americans to ponder as their country becomes increasingly multi-ethnic and multicultural.

To an American who finds Powell more right than wrong on the "national questions", his long-held disdain for the United States is a bitter pill. It arose first in the Second World War, when Powell was shocked at what he perceived as America's wasteful (in terms of military resources) way of warfare. The "rivers of blood" speech owed much to the racial strife Powell witnessed in the United States during a 1967 visit. In the last decade of the Cold War he would argue that however unpleasant the Soviet system, it posed little threat to Britain. When American conservatives warned against Europe's "self-Finlandization" vis-à-vis Moscow, Powell retorted that Britain had already Finlandized itself in relation to Washington. Such thoughts were then rare (or at least seldom voiced) among European conservatives, but they may be a harbinger: even in the democratic West, the United States is not loved so automatically as Americans sometimes assume.

Powell saw Margaret Thatcher turn into policy—and then into bipartisan orthodoxy—the respect for the free market he had advocated in his early days in Parliament; on immigration he changed the political climate almost single-handedly. Yet it is still not clear how much of his influence was durable. He lost on the key issue of Britain's entry into Europe; more generally, Powellism is out of fashion in all the major Western conservative parties, where free market concerns now take clear precedence over national ones. If these parties become (as Powell might have put it) parties of class and not of nation, he would not be surprised to see them flounder—and indeed, they are either out of power or lagging severely in the polls in all the Western democracies. It may be that what the Tories—and indeed all of the conservative parties of the West—need most is another dose of Powellism. □

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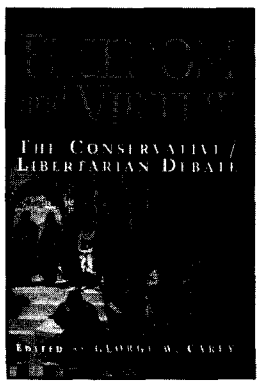

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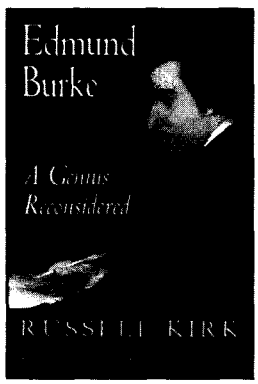

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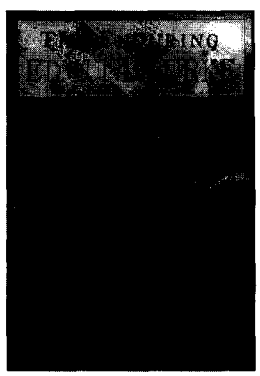

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Graham T. Allison, Owen R. Coté, Jr., Richard A. Falkenrath, and Steven E. Miller, *Avoiding Nuclear Anarchy: Containing the Threat of Loose Russian Nuclear Weapons and Fissile Material* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), 295 pp., $16.

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WHEREAS THE principal aim of American nuclear policy during the Cold War was to deter a strong and aggressive Soviet Union, the nuclear risks we face today stem from Russian weakness. Russia's conventional forces have declined to the point that they can no longer protect Russian territory, and into this vacuum has rushed a growing reliance on nuclear weapons—including the prospect of their first use early in any serious conventional conflict. To make matters worse, the nuclear forces themselves have become vulnerable. Budget shortages prevent Russia from dispersing its weapons into the sanctuaries of the oceans and forests, to the point that, in their present configuration, its strategic forces could not ride out a U.S. attack. Consequently, Russia today faces far stronger pressures to "use or lose" its nuclear arsenal than at any time since the early 1960s.

While Russia relies more on nuclear weapons and on launching them on warning, its nuclear control regime is steadily deteriorating in physical, organizational, and human terms. Soviet designers built an impressive command system to ensure strict central control over nuclear weapons—a core value of Soviet political and military culture—but they understandably overlooked a host of dangers that developed after the Soviet empire dissolved. The list is long: coups, rebellions, secession, severe civil-military tensions, huge cuts in defense spending, dire working and living conditions even for elite nuclear units, operational atrophy and declining proficiency in matters of operational safety, widespread corruption, and pervasive demoralization. All the trends pertinent to the functioning of Russia's nuclear command and early warning system are negative, casting strong doubt on its ability to endure the stress and strain indefinitely. Russian nuclear forces are becoming more susceptible to accidental, unauthorized, or mistaken launch. This situation is worrisome enough even under normal conditions, and could become extremely dangerous if the Russian command system should come under heavy pressure during an internal or international crisis.

This is my view of the present state of affairs, and Peter Pry shares it. But he

Editor's note: Peter Pry's *War Scare* is not yet available for general purchase. The book was originally taken under contract by Turner Books, which in 1997 distributed a few hundred galley copies of the manuscript. Turner Books went out of business after the Turner/Time Warner merger, and dropped its entire pending list. An updated manuscript of *War Scare* is awaiting publication. Bruce Blair has reviewed the 1997 galley here.

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stretches the envelope too far, and thereby exposes this view to caricature and ridicule. He claims that practically every major and minor domestic and international crisis in Russia during the 1990s brought the world to the brink of Armageddon. Thus Pry argues that during the August 1991 coup, the Russian defense minister "almost certainly thought the coup, as an act of self-decapitation, would tempt the United States to consider a nuclear surprise attack." Pry believes the Soviets raised their nuclear alert level during the coup in order to beat the Americans to the punch if necessary. His interpretation of this episode, as with numerous other alleged nuclear "close calls", solidifies into the bald-faced assertion that "Soviet strategic nuclear forces had nearly launched a preemptive strike that would have taken the United States completely by surprise."

A similar interpretation is offered for the parliamentary crisis of fall 1993, pitting Boris Yeltsin against Alexander Rutskoy in mortal political combat. Once again top defense officials and the General Staff allegedly feared that the United States would seize upon the internal crisis as "an opportunity for launching a surprise attack." Pry details a Russian nuclear exercise conducted during the internal crisis, citing it as evidence that "the military girded for a possible U.S. surprise nuclear attack during the long anticipated showdown between Yeltsin and Rutskoy." By "girding" Pry means that the Russian General Staff was seriously ready to unleash a massive pre-emptive salvo of nuclear missiles against the United States. He also finds ample evidence of Russian readiness to fire a nuclear weapon at a U.S. radar installation in Turkey if Turkey had directly entered the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

This litany of "war scares"—stretching from the early 1980s through the 1995 nuclear false alarm triggered by Norway's launching of a scientific rocket—indicates to Pry that the Russian military's paranoia about a sudden U.S. nuclear strike, combined with the country's internal turmoil, has created a real nuclear risk about which we (himself apart) remain totally ignorant. Russia could easily miscalculate U.S. nuclear intentions and mount a nuclear attack, he says, "for no good reason." This brief is sometimes persuasive, particularly in the case of the tense nuclear relations during the early 1980s. And although he stretches his thesis beyond its tinsel strength, the Russian defense establishment *is* more suspicious of the West than most observers imagine, the nuclear threshold *is* lower than commonly perceived, and the domestic and international context *is* a more pivotal factor in Russian threat assessment than is normally recognized. Worse, perhaps, the danger of Russian nuclear miscalculation is not as remote as many suppose, and the progressive deterioration of Russian early warning and control represents a more serious threat than either of our governments is willing to acknowledge. Pry stands on solid ground, too, when he advises the United States to weigh more carefully the potential for our security policies, military operations, and exercises to rattle the Russians, whose current military weakness increases their susceptibility to fear and panic.

Pry also accurately describes the Russian nuclear early warning and command system, and gives an excellent account of the 1995 false alarm that activated Yeltsin's famous nuclear suitcase and initiated an emergency conference to decide whether to launch Russian missiles in retaliation. Still, some of the descriptive material is wrong or highly debatable on fairly important matters. For instance, he suggests that the Russian command system was designed mainly to guarantee nuclear strike execution, not to prevent unauthorized launch. In reality, the Soviet Union went to extraordinary lengths to prevent an illicit launch; in many respects its safeguards were, and Russia's remain, designed to be even more stringent than those within the present U.S. system. Alas, they were *not* designed to handle power surges on the scale of a coup, or to function in the absence of proper maintenance and operation.

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Pry maintains, too, that the codes needed to unlock Russian weapons are widely distributed down the chain of command, even down to the level of individual submarines. To me, however, the preponderance of evidence suggests that, under normal peacetime conditions, the launch authorization and unlock codes are held in the exclusive custody of the General Staff. All current Russian strategic forces are locked and the firing crews require special unlock codes from the General Staff in order to launch them. Pry is probably correct in saying that the General Staff, from their war rooms at Chekhov and elsewhere, possess all the codes needed to initiate a strategic missile attack. But he should take to heart his own indictment of the U.S. intelligence community for its many failures to detect and comprehend Russian nuclear operations. A well-placed Russian has told me that through 1991 the unlock codes were kept in a safe in the General Staff war room, and that two combinations were needed to unlock it. One combination was known only to the senior General Staff officer on duty, and the other was known only to an officer assigned by the KGB. Admittedly, the picture is still somewhat fuzzy, and it may be impossible to peel every layer off this onion.

Despite his occasional rashness in going beyond the evidence, Pry's technical expertise is extensive, reflecting his work in this area for some ten years as a senior CIA analyst (1985-95). It is his interpretations of the motives, attitudes, and beliefs of the Russian military that are often suspect. For example, he cites the case of Colonel Gennady Pavlov as evidence of the Russian General Staff's effort to cover up its preparations for launching a preemptive nuclear strike during the 1991 coup. Pry asserts that in order to downplay this threat, right after the coup the General Staff dispatched Col. Pavlov to testify before the U.S. Congress, without any invitation from the United States. Not so; I invited Col. Pavlov. I had met him months before the coup, and had arranged for him to testify before Les Aspin's committee a year earlier, a plan that collapsed because of Soviet heavy-handedness in the Baltics. (I was slated to testify before the Soviet parliament, and that fell through as well.) After the 1991 coup, I asked Senator Joseph Biden whether he would like to receive testimony about Soviet nuclear safeguards during the coup from a real Soviet expert, and the Senator responded with the invitation. No deep dark scheme here.

Pry's tendency to infer conspiracy where none exists is exhibited in another section of the book to which my name is linked, and that concerns the automated launch system known as the "dead hand." In the event of an attack that decapitates the top leadership in Moscow, the "dead hand" provides for quasi-automatic missile retaliation. I disclosed the existence of this project in a 1993 *New York Times* article. I learned about it through sources whose reliability and sincerity had long been established to my satisfaction. The U.S. intelligence community was initially incredulous, but most intelligence agencies no longer doubt the existence and function of the "dead hand", codenamed "Perimetr." Pry, on the other hand, suggests that it may be disinformation. "Paranoid Russian military officers may have concocted it to dissuade the United States from attempting a surprise nuclear attack." I disagree.

Pry's provocative book nonetheless contains a rewarding amount of new information and insight into Russia's nuclear netherworld. It is a disturbing work that, for all its overblown conjecture, hits upon real and critical issues, not least the paramount need to understand better Russia's point of view. Pry seriously attempts to put himself into the shoes of Russian nuclear planners to understand their mindset, and the reader gains a degree of understanding and even sympathy for their security dilemmas as a result. That effort is both rare and admirable.

BOTH THE Cockburns' *One Point Safe* and the *Avoiding Nuclear Anarchy* volume from Harvard worry less about a nuclear missile attack than about the security

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of Russian weapons and fissile materials against theft and diversion to rogue states and terrorists. Allison's scholarly tome and the Cockburns' highly readable, fascinating exposé carry the same message: Vast stockpiles of weapons and bomb-making plutonium and uranium in Russia are insecure and could easily leak onto the black market, and neither Russia nor the United States has tried hard enough to prevent this from happening.

The Harvard study exudes passion on the subject without sacrificing analytical rigor. It mixes dry exposition with jolting rhetoric that inevitably drops the big one, the dreaded "worst-case" specter of a full collapse of the Russian nuclear custodial system, opening the floodgates for weapons, materials, and design expertise to pour out. Not only rogue states but also terrorist groups "would be able to shop at the Russian nuclear bazaar." The study reviews past smuggling incidents that may be harbingers of the nightmare scenario, and outlines the many flaws in Russian security.[1] It explains in great detail how and why the Russian, U.S., and international response to this threat has been inadequate, and what needs to be done about it.

Allison and his fellow authors realize that, while essential, averting the disaster of a full collapse of Russian security is in itself not good enough. We must prevent even a trickle. We cannot afford the theft of even one nuclear weapon, or the leakage of even a small amount of raw fissile material. Most states (for example, Iraq) and many terrorist groups would find it relatively easy to build a nuclear weapon once the fissile material was acquired. The book explains this in detail, though it fails to explain that, by nuclear weapons standards, any bomb fashioned by the usual suspect states and terrorist organizations would almost certainly be crude and relatively low yield. A leading authority on this issue, Tom Cochran, estimates that the terrorist variant would likely fall into the range of tens to hundreds of tons of explosive power (the Oklahoma City bomb was several tons), while the rogue state variant would likely range from perhaps a kiloton to a Hiroshima-class yield (13 kilotons). There is at least a modicum of consolation in these limitations.

Despite its scholarly approach, the reader sometimes feels pushed around by the authors' unwavering convictions. The rhetoric is somewhat intimidating for those who might disagree with, or simply wish to question, the categorical positions taken. If one harbors any doubt about, say, the existence of terrorist demand for fissile materials—even minute quantities of odd batches of isotopes of uneven purity—one is practically branded a wrong-headed heretic whose thoughts would be deeply pernicious if allowed to infiltrate national security policy; this despite the authors' admission that "so far, there is little hard evidence to prove the existence of [such demand]." Likewise, the notion that it is far from easy for terrorist groups to fashion a nuclear bomb from stolen fissile materials invites a scowling reproach. The authors' assertions are probably close to the mark, but they leave too little room for intellectual curiosity. And after all, the historical record has not exactly vindicated the authors' positions on some key points in the past.

If their argument were to be judged according to scientific standards, which require an argument to carry the burden of demonstrating its validity, then it would be contemptuously dismissed. The book would, in my view, stand on firmer ground if it were to say that in this case this is *not* an acceptable standard—that because of the destructive potential involved, the argument that nuclear leakage is an immediate and urgent problem demands evaluation before it is proved right or wrong by decisive experience. There is good reason to impose the burden of proof on

[1]Compulsory reading for aficionados of this subject is *Nuclear Successor States of the Soviet Union: Status Report on Nuclear Weapons, Fissile Material, and Export Controls*, No. 5, March 1998, Monterey Institute of International Studies and Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC.

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anyone who would deny the more somber implications of their analysis; but shifting the burden of proof should not stifle the inquiry.

This reservation apart, the book's "anti-leakage agenda" is solid and creative, though of course its success depends ultimately on Russian cooperation, a precarious commodity that cannot be taken for granted. Indeed, the lack of such cooperation is cited as the factor most responsible for slow progress. Allison and company also blame the U.S. government for devoting too little attention and resources to preventing leakage, and they allude to other impediments such as bureaucratic in-fighting over the "loose nukes" portfolio. But they are less interested in pointing accusatory fingers than in building momentum for their anti-leakage agenda. One appreciates the constructive spirit of this comprehensive book.

FOR THOSE READERS with an appetite for the gory details of the political and bureaucratic battles waged by missionaries inside the government in order to advance the anti-leakage agenda, the Cockburns' account performs the necessary vivisection. The book reveals an heroic struggle by a handful of Clinton appointees and civil servants to overcome bureaucratic apathy, resistance, and internecine turf warfare.

In telling the story, the authors provide riveting accounts of then-secret government sorties into remote locales—into Kazakhstan, to evacuate a large stockpile of weapons-usable material from a virtually unguarded warehouse; and into Chechnya, to investigate the rebel leader Dudayev's claim that he had acquired two Soviet nuclear weapons and might offer them to Libya's Muammar Qaddafi. The Cockburns' investigations uncover many other pieces of the nuclear leakage puzzle, too, including strong circumstantial evidence pointing to the smuggling of nuclear weapons-related materials to Iran, Iraq, and North Korea through a Vienna-based front company named Nordex, headed by a former KGB officer. The Cockburns also reveal the wheeling and dealing of Russia's nuclear weapons czar Victor Mikhailov (recently deposed by Yeltsin) to build nuclear power plants for Iran, thereby enhancing Tehran's prospects for acquiring a nuclear bomb. All this and more—including the controversial revelation by General Alexander Lebed that, as head of the Russian Security Council, he tried and failed to locate many scores of portable nuclear weapons in the Russian inventory—surfaced during extensive research and many interviews with the key players conducted by the authors. The book thus rests firmly on first-hand accounts as well as on interviews with outside experts and other documentation.

Despite this impressive effort, *One Point Safe* has been the target of scathing attacks by a number of respected experts. For the significant part of the book that overlaps my specialization—particularly the chapter devoted mainly to Russia's system of control over missiles on alert—I found a few minor errors (partly my own fault because I advised the authors on this material), but on the whole they meet high standards of accuracy. Indeed, I have not read a better treatment.

To evaluate the rest of the book, I spoke with many of the people mentioned therein, prominently or otherwise, and investigated the major accusations levied by the book's critics. One of the harshest criticisms has come from William Arkin, a weapons expert who was serving as a U.S. Army intelligence analyst in West Berlin and concentrating on terrorism at the time of the 1977 terrorist attack, whose recounting opens the Cockburns' book: a midnight raid on a U.S. base housing nuclear weapons in Germany. The Cockburns assert that the terrorists were trying to steal a nuclear weapon. Arkin claims that the commandos never attacked the area of the base where the weapons were stored, and that there is no evidence that they knew or cared about nuclear weapons. Arkin excoriates not only the Cockburns' "miserable" book and its "exaggeration", but all "loose nukes ambulance chasers" for lacking his real

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sense of how Russia actually guards its nuclear storage sites—a sense acquired in his case from visiting ex-Soviet sites in East Germany and Hungary after Russia's nuclear weapons security unit, the 12th Directorate, vacated the premises and returned the stockpiles to Russia. The physical security measures in Eastern Europe impressed him deeply.

In checking out the terrorist incident, I obtained authoritative first-hand information that confirmed the Cockburns' account. The nuclear storage area was fired upon and the defenders of the area returned fire. That it was an open secret that the site housed nuclear weapons lends no credence to Arkin's suggestion that the commandos had no prior knowledge of their existence at the site. Moreover, the commandos' trial was orchestrated to avoid all discussion of nuclear weapons matters, so it is no wonder that evidence of the terrorists' nuclear intentions, if they existed, never surfaced. True, the Cockburn book does not prove the view that stealing a weapon was the terrorists' objective. But it remains a plausible conjecture, and the rest of the account withstands scrutiny.

Furthermore, the Cockburns may be forgiven for not sharing Arkin's enthusiasm for Russian nuclear weapons security, even at the depots in East Germany that Arkin found so impressively protected. After all, while a staff member of Greenpeace, Arkin negotiated for months to acquire a nuclear warhead from a Russian security officer in the 12th Directorate responsible for guarding weapons at one of those depots. By his own account at the time (he told me about the deal just after it fell through), an exchange was nearly consummated, and the book accurately relates the story.

The major weakness of *One Point Safe* is that it misses big chunks of the policy history and misallocates credit and blame among key players—too much magnification here and foreshortening there. Some of the bureaucratic villains (mostly at the Defense Department) escape nearly unscathed in the book, while some of the "white hats" receive either too much or too little glory. It is not clear whether the book distorts the fuller politico-bureaucratic history of U.S. anti-leakage efforts; although none of the real-world players holds it up as the definitive account, most acknowledge that the Cockburns accurately recount a major portion of this history, including the poignant story of how a handful of inspired men and women outflanked the bureaucracy to create the most successful of all the anti-leakage projects—the fruitful link forged between scientists from U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons laboratories. This illumination, combined with its engrossing examination of the nuclear scene in Russia and elsewhere, suggests that its merits much outweigh its debits.

Finally, *One Point Safe* has managed a feat that no other book about nuclear safety has ever come close to matching: it was the basis for a screenplay that became a major adventure movie, *The Peacemaker*. The Cockburns originally planned to write an article on "loose nukes" for a popular magazine, but in the course of interviewing Jessica Stern, the holder of this portfolio at the National Security Council, they conceived a movie treatment with a Ms. Stern character playing the protagonist. They pitched it to DreamWorks Pictures, and the rest is history—except that the plot thickened. The article grew into *One Point Safe* with Ms. Stern as real-life protagonist. Ongoing research for *One Point Safe* fed into the script of *The Peacemaker*, for which the Cockburns were co-producers. The research was also spun off into two segments aired on *60 Minutes*, one about missing Russian suitcase bombs, the other about the danger of keeping U.S. and Russian nuclear missiles on hair-trigger alert. Leslie Cockburn produced both segments.

Some wit described the Cockburns' creative process as art imitating life imitating art. But it's not even *that* simple. □

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Rude Awakening

Martin Kramer

Fouad Ajami, *The Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's Odyssey* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), 334 pp., $26.

IN 1936, COLUMBIA University offered George Antonius a visiting appointment. Antonius, then putting the finishing touches on his soon-to-be-famous book, *The Arab Awakening*, had crossed the United States the previous spring, lecturing at the Council on Foreign Relations, the Brookings Institution, Princeton, Harvard, Columbia, Michigan, Chicago, and Stanford. In Washington, he had an audience with President Roosevelt. His listeners were captivated: he was articulate, charming, persuasive on behalf of Arab independence and Arab Palestine. Had Antonius established himself the following year atop Morningside Heights, he might have had a profound influence upon the way America came to perceive the Middle East. But he allowed Columbia's offer to languish. America was too far away, too insignificant in the equation of power in the Middle East to attract the ambitious author.

Early in *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, Fouad Ajami—who lives on Morningside Heights—writes of sifting through Antonius' papers and visiting his grave in Jerusalem. Here Ajami sets the tone that pervades his new book. Antonius erred. The cause he championed—Arab nationalism, sometimes centered upon the claim to Palestine—later betrayed its children, spawning oppression and poverty, scattering the best Arab minds to the refuge of the West. But Antonius is not judged, for to believe is to be vulnerable. Arab intellectuals believed in the cause, sanctified it, embellished it, even as it robbed them of their freedoms, exiled them, imprisoned them. Only over the last decade or so have the daydreams of nationalism been disrupted. It is a rude awakening, a violent shaking. It has found a masterly narrator in Fouad Ajami.

It was Ajami's earlier book, *The Arab Predicament* (1981), that finally broke the spell of *The Arab Awakening*. In it, Ajami probed the discontent that spread with the failure of the nationalist project following Arab independence and the debacle of 1967. It was a harsh indictment of the post-colonial Arab condition—a condition that has continued to deteriorate, necessitating another regression report. This new book draws its title from the claim by T.E. Lawrence that he had acted in Arabia to give the Arabs "the foundations on which to build an inspired dream palace of their national thoughts." If the dream has become a nightmare, and the palace a prison, who must accept responsibility? For Ajami, this has never even been a question: It was not the Lawrences, the well-intentioned or malicious foreigners, but the Arabs themselves who put bars upon the windows of their "dream palace", and posted executioners in the gardens.

Before the message, a word on the medium—and since many passages in this book are written in the first person, they invite a closer scrutiny of the author's own remarkable position in America. Fouad Ajami's authority arises not only from his combination of intelligence, knowledge, and style. It is also evidence of a continuing crisis of self-confidence in the American understanding of the Middle East.

To interpret the Arabs, America long preferred to rely upon its own wandering native sons—missionaries like Daniel Bliss, who founded what became the American University of Beirut, or AUB; artists like Frederick

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Bridgman and Edwin Lord Weeks; and lovers of the desert outback, like the anthropologist Carleton S. Coon. It was a patchy tradition, stitched together with borrowings from the more substantial British store of knowledge. Still, a distinct American school of Arabism did exist, arguably reaching its summit in the political scientist Malcolm Kerr. Born in Beirut to American educators at AUB, schooled at Princeton, tenured at UCLA, Kerr had all of the tools. Americans like him would interpret the Middle East not only for themselves, but for the world—Arabs included.

Yet almost overnight, this American expertise on the Arab world went bankrupt, betrayed by the Lebanese civil war in 1975. Lebanon was that part of the Arab world the Americans knew best, and they were confident—they knew—it would achieve an American-like equilibrium among competing interests. Later, Elizabeth and Robert Fernea, two American academic "old hands", wrote of how "social science of the 1950s was possessed by a quest for social order; even conflict was seen as producing in-group solidarity, never as the basis for further and greater disorder." From this perspective, "class differences and kinship networks were seen to be in complementary distribution in Lebanon. The lines of possible conflict were balanced by ties of common interest. Peaceful coexistence between class and ethnic groups seemed assured."

When Lebanon shattered, expert assurances lost all worth. In accepting the presidency of AUB in 1982, Kerr himself went back into the flames to save something of the tradition. But it was too late. Kerr once admitted (in a passage quoted by Ajami) that "Our small cast of heroes and villains was being crowded out by a new mass of faceless participants, too numerous and too amorphous to be either controlled or held accountable." It was from the amorphous and faceless mass that Kerr's own assassins stepped forward to kill him on AUB's campus in 1984. As Lebanon imploded, confidence in American understanding of the Arabs sank—above all, among Americans themselves. It has yet to recover.

The failure made space for two Arab-American interpreters: Edward Said and Fouad Ajami. Each opened windows on Arab realities that American expertise had underestimated—Said, the "dispossessed" Palestinian, reminding America of festering grievances against Israel and its backers; Ajami, the "displaced" Lebanese Shi'a, reminding America of how brutally unforgiving the Arabs could be of one another. It does not matter that Said himself is not "dispossessed", or that Ajami is not "displaced." Each personifies a different vantage point—in many respects, opposite points—on the choices made by the Arabs, and the degree of responsibility they bear for their condition. Over the last twenty years, Said and Ajami have divided American opinion between them. Other voices are heard but none counts as much, for Said and Ajami come from within, and claim to speak knowingly about what can be known only from within.

Who has got it right? If you are a denizen of academe, you most probably will have preferred Said. He will have reached you through his easy mastery of the postmodernist, deconstructionist theories that first became fashionable in his field of literary criticism, and which have since infiltrated every discipline. He will have played successfully upon your own nagging doubts about whether American power is a benevolent thing in the world. And he will have drawn upon your almost automatic sympathy for those who claim themselves its victims, and whose lingering defiance reassures you that, somewhere, the struggle goes on.

But if you are a downtown consumer of the news from Arab lands, you most probably will have preferred Ajami. His approachable prose will have made complex issues comprehensible. His presentation of the Arabs as people who have made choices of their own will have appealed to your sense that people decide whether they know peace or war, wax rich or grow poor—that, as Hegel put it, nobody is coerced who does not will his own coercion. And he will have given you some inkling as to why the Arabs, for all the talk of

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their undying commitment to unity and freedom, remain divided and oppressed, and fill your television screen with "presidential palaces" and slit throats.

IN MANY RESPECTS, the message of Ajami's new book is a reiteration. The Arabs have defeated themselves by a blind adherence to anachronistic ideologies of self-glorification, both nationalist and Islamist. They are now adrift. "A deep political crisis had set in by the early 1980s", writes Ajami, "and what remained . . . was a new world of cruelty, waste, and confusion." This crisis culminated in the "hatching" of Saddam Hussein, the most hideous of the mutations of Arab nationalism.

The intellectuals were supposed to guard the ideal against its corruption. After all, Arab nationalism had been their project, and even today, when raw power is wielded by men like Saddam, a political poem by Nizar Qabbani—who died on April 30 at age 75—can fire Arab imaginations. But the record of the Arab intellectuals over the past two decades has been mixed at best. Some bowed down before the tyrants, others ridiculed the drift toward pragmatism—"normal traffic" with America or peace with Israel. Again, Ajami is careful to withhold final judgment: he quotes their poems and tells their stories with a judicious restraint. But there is a subtle suggestion that the poets, novelists, and playwrights, in their fervor, have done the Arabs an unforgivable disservice. This is not the Arabic *khiyana*, the treasonous trafficking with the enemy; but it is the *trahison des clercs*, the self-betrayal of the intellectuals, for which others must pay the price.

For the Arab reader, there is much in this book to give pause—but so, too, for the American reader less riveted by pirouettes of Arab poets. Ajami, as it happens, does believe that American power can be used to benevolent purposes, and that an opportunity to do so was missed in the last days of the Gulf War—a "heartless ending for a moral crusade", a "moral abdication." James Baker, the "spinmaster", is described as a man "oddly disengaged" from the consequences of his own decisions over Iraq. The United States, having urged the Shi'a and Kurds to rebellion, abandoned them to a grim fate; the American victory has remained tarnished and incomplete.

There is also a warning here over Egypt. The regime is steady, but the country is losing its race with modernity. Its "pride is more than its accomplishments": Egypt is scarred by unrelenting poverty, a bleak political landscape, sectarian strife between Muslim and Copt, and a precipitous decline in the country's cultural life. Over the last two decades, Egypt has received $40 billion in U.S. military and economic assistance, yet there is "a curious free-floating hostility to American ideals and interests, a conviction that the United States wishes Egypt permanent dependency and helplessness . . . [and] a belief that the United States is somehow engaged with Israel in an attempt to diminish and hem in Egypt's power and influence." What is really happening, believes Ajami, is that Egypt is slowly imploding upon itself—an outcome that could complicate America's position in the Middle East far more than the implosion of Lebanon over a generation ago.

And then there is the "orphaned peace" with Israel. The peace is opposed violently by Islamists, but its more formidable critics are the very people regarded by American political scientists as the nucleus of "civil society." True, writes Ajami, "it is hard to know with any precision where opposition to the rulers per se ends and animus toward Israel begins." But the sum is the same. Even the most idealistic Israeli peace, the "exuberant" peace of Shimon Peres, has only a handful of partisans among the Arab intellectuals—most of whom, Ajami reminds us, preferred the aloof Yitzhak Rabin and, now even more, the blunt Benyamin Netanyahu, who they believe validates their caricature of Israel as hating and hateful.

And so now the poets are free to indulge in even greater excess. Here is Qabbani, in

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one of his last poems (which Ajami does not quote):

> I am with terrorism
> as long as this new world order
> is shared
> between America and Israel
> half-half
> I am with terrorism
> with all my poetry
> with all my words
> and all my teeth
> as long as this new world
> is in the hands of a butcher.

"Let us leave politics to the diplomats and the soldiers", said Goethe. The (real) palace is probably just where Arab politics belong. □

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Getting It Off Pat

Walter A. McDougall

Patrick J. Buchanan, *The Great Betrayal: How American Sovereignty and Social Justice Are Being Sacrificed to the Gods of the Global Economy* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1998), 384 pp., $22.95.

PAT BUCHANAN will not go away. Even if his planned third run for the presidency should reduce him to Harold Stassen status, he is confident that the economic nationalism he espouses will capture one or both major parties. In fact, he believes that the tide has already turned, as demonstrated by the refusal of Congress to grant President Clinton "fast track" authority to reduce trade barriers. After sixty years of hegemony, the free-trade establishment finally lost an intellectual and political battle, and for him that means "the counter-revolution" has begun.

The Great Betrayal is a manifesto that conservatives will ignore at their peril. For whatever they think of Buchanan's economics, his political and moral broadsides against current U.S. trade policy thunder. Consider that since 1970 real wages of American workers have fallen 19 percent, while the price of an average new house has risen from two to four times the income of an average young couple, and the portion of young mothers in the workplace has soared from 18 to 63 percent. Consider that the federal tax bite, a mere 3 percent of the average family income in 1950, is now 25 percent, that the dollar has lost two-thirds of its value against the deutschemark and yen since 1970, that manufacturing now accounts for only 17 percent of the U.S. national income, and that government employees now outnumber factory workers in twenty-eight states. Consider that imports as a share of America's GNP, just 7 percent in 1965, are now five times that number, and that two trillion dollars in American capital has flowed overseas in the past twenty years to finance the trade deficits that exploded, according to Buchanan's charts and graphs, the moment the United States flung open its market to foreigners without receiving or even asking for reciprocation.

In short, Buchanan's message is that "Free trade is not free." And while statistics may not play well on the stump, he expects that stories of closed plants, gutted industries, dying towns, and ruined families in a de-industrialized, dependent America will res-

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onate not only with blue-collar ethnics in Manchester, but with all voters who do not earn a living at a computer terminal. They will ask why there is no work for them at a time when the economy and stock market are booming, and if free traders make no reply, the field will be left to Buchanan, for whom the answers are not economic but political and profoundly historical.

BUCHANAN'S technique is to return to the roots of American history and inquire how the United States became the greatest productive powerhouse and wealthiest society in the history of the world. He reminds us that Americans took up arms in 1776 for economic as well as political independence, to throw off their bondage to British manufactures, and that the Constitution was inspired in part by the new nation's need for a uniform tariff policy, lest the thirteen states be played off against each other by mercantilist, predatory foreigners. The first initiative of President George Washington and Speaker of the House James Madison was the Tariff Act of 1789, and the grand strategy of Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton was "the encouragement and protection of manufactures." Certain agrarians rued his vision of a mercantile, workshop America, but after prolonged commercial struggles with Britain led to the War of 1812 even Thomas Jefferson changed his mind: "He . . . who is now against domestic manufacture, must be for reducing us either to dependence on that foreign nation, or to be clothed in skins. . . . [M]anufactures are now as necessary to our independence as to our comfort."

Buchanan then explains America's rise to unprecedented economic power as a result of protectionism, beginning with the Tariff of 1816 that saved the infant American textile industry from British dumping following the Napoleonic Wars. Democrat Andrew Jackson was an economic nationalist and he stared down the South Carolinians who presumed to "nullify" the Tariff of 1828. Whigs under Henry Clay were protectionist, and Republican Abraham Lincoln won the nomination and presidency largely because of his pro-tariff stance. With the exception of Grover Cleveland's two interludes, the nation elected Republican protectionists for the rest of the century, during which time Americans quadrupled their national product, pioneered a host of technologies, ran a budget surplus almost every year (with no income tax), retired two-thirds of the national debt, saw real wages rise 53 percent and commodity prices *fall* 58 percent, and poured their own exports onto world markets.

There was an alien snake in the garden, however, who repeatedly hissed his temptations. It was not Adam Smith, whom Buchanan quotes chapter-and-verse to show that while Smith was a free marketeer, he was a nationalist when it came to "industry necessary for the defense of the country", "encouragement of domestic industry", and "retaliation" against unfair foreign practices. The real sources of free-trade ideology were utopians such as David Hume, John Stuart Mill, and above all Richard Cobden, who preached that wholly unfettered trade would eliminate empires and wars, melt nations away, and unify mankind: it was "God's diplomacy." Free traders found few converts in America until the turn of the twentieth century, when one branch of Progressives led by the Anglophile Woodrow Wilson made free trade a plank in its platform for a new world order. But after World War I Wilson failed to persuade his own people, not to mention Europeans and Asians, of the merits of free trade, and Republican congresses returned to protection with a vengeance. The happy result, the author suggests, was that the American economy in the 1920s boomed once again.

Then came the Crash of 1929, after which, according to Buchanan, a powerful lobby based not in business or labor, but government and the academy, persuaded Americans to reject the real lessons of history and swallow instead materialist myths. Avid one-worlders such as Secretary of State

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Cordell Hull argued that tariffs were somehow responsible for the Depression, fascism, and World War II, and the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930 in particular became "an epithet, a synonym for a selfish, crabbed conservatism." How, Buchanan asks, could that tariff have caused or prolonged the Depression, inasmuch as total imports amounted to a mere 4 percent of America's GNP at the time, and the tariff applied to only a third of all imports?

But the tides of history, argues the author, washed away what was once common sense to Americans. First, economists rejected protectionism as "old-time religion" (even as John Maynard Keynes was embracing it). Next, the neo-Wilsonians in FDR's brain trust blamed the failure of peacemaking after World War I on economic nationalism and based their own postwar planning on free trade. Third, former protectionists reasoned that as the U.S. economy accounted for 40 percent of the world's production in 1945, it had nothing to fear from foreign competition. Fourth, the Cold War broke out, and Truman and Eisenhower alike judged that the opening of the U.S. market to Europeans and Asians was needed to ensure their allegiance. Finally, the Goldwater conservatives who captured the Republican Party "read Milton Friedman and mocked William McKinley with the relish of a New Dealer. I know", writes Pat, "because I was one of them."

Buchanan grants that favoring foreign traders who themselves neither believed in nor practiced free trade (viz., Japan) may have been necessary to help Europe and Asia recover from World War II and to cement our Cold War coalition. But by the 1960s, he insists, generosity had turned into folly as succeeding administrations pushed for reductions of tariffs through the GATT, granted privileged access to Third World products, made one-sided deals with Japan and Europe, and later awarded most favored nation status to China, and finally concocted the NAFTA. The result was that the U.S. government itself subjected one industry after another—from fisheries to chinaware, textiles to cameras, tomatoes to automobiles—to unfettered competition from subsidized foreign firms that paid wages a fraction of those earned by American workers, even as it burdened U.S. firms with punitive taxes and regulations. American workers may be the most productive on earth, quips Buchanan, but if you put five hundred pounds on Secretariat's back even he would lose the race to a Chinese mule or Mexican burro. That is why he does not blame American executives for taking their operations offshore. But having done so, he laments, they cease to think of their firm as American and instead, as National Cash Register's chief executive boasts, "as a globally competitive company that happens to be headquartered in the United States."

Do not all Americans, including the working class, benefit from free trade as consumers? No more than the profligate grasshopper "benefited" more than the industrious ant, rebuts Buchanan. Common sense says that money must be earned before it is spent, and that a nation is no mere "consumer cooperative." Citing nineteenth-century examples, he argues that dynamic American companies do not need the stimulus of foreign competition to produce cheap, high quality goods. At worst, tariffs impose "temporary sacrifices on the part of the consumers, for the long-term independence of the nation", and are a small price to pay to save the American dream, reduce dependence on foreigners for strategic goods and commodities, and halt the return of America to the status of "colony—a colony of the world."

Buchanan concludes with a fetching pitch for "enlightened nationalism." First, he would exit the World Trade Organization and levy a 15 percent revenue tariff (modest by historical standards) on all imports. Second, against countries whose labor is cheap he would enact Teddy Roosevelt's Rule of 1907, which adjusted tariffs on the basis of "the difference in the cost of production here and abroad . . . for the well-being of the wage-worker must ever be a cardinal point of American policy."

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Third, he would use the bountiful proceeds from tariffs to abolish the IRS and enact a flat tax or national sales tax. Fourth, he would halt illegal immigration and reduce the quotas for legal entry. Under this plan, he promises, the trade deficit would disappear, American vulnerability to global financial turmoil would be reduced, corrupt foreign influence on our politics would abate, U.S. corporations would rush to build plants at home, millions of young people would find jobs, thus relieving social pathologies (crime, drugs) borne of indigence, and taxes would fall for all Americans. The only losers would be the internationalist, corporatist, "knowledge-based" elites who get rich at the expense of the little guy in the name of a one-world utopianism that was never "the American Way" to begin with.

AS A POLITICAL tract, this is powerful stuff, but its history is rather "too pat." Many factors other than tariffs account for U.S. industrialization (including huge doses of foreign capital and a domestic market and work force swelled by foreign immigrants), and many factors other than free trade account for Britain's decline (including a rigid class system, empire and wars, bouts of socialism, and the inevitable diffusion of technology). Nor must one embrace Cobdenite theology to argue that while politics may indeed trump economics in the competition among nations, economic policies can have mighty political effects (as when U.S. tariffs and Chinese boycotts helped push the Japanese into militarism). Likewise, the dire statistics of the past twenty years cannot be explained without reference to the massive inflation stemming from America's loss of cheap energy after 1972.

But perhaps the most ironic rejoinder that can be made to Buchanan is that he appears to make government the solution. An equalization tariff would require the Commerce Department not only to keep minute statistics on the production costs in every American plant, but somehow to obtain the same data for every plant in the *world* in order to fix tariffs—and therefore prices—on every product sold in this country. If American manufacturers carry burdens such as the minimum wage, environmental and social obligations, corporate taxes, and regulations of all sort, is the solution then for the U.S. government artificially to impose the same burdens on foreigners? Would not the proper "conservative" solution be to expand freedom at home rather than regulation abroad?

I shall leave it to the economists to judge whether Buchanan is "full of prunes" (as my old Hoosier dad used to say) about theoretical questions. But his political appeal is an empirical question that will soon be answered in Congress, if not the snows of New Hampshire. For come what may, Pat Buchanan will not go away. Dismal Science, meet the Happy Warrior. □

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Senatorial Logic

"NATO is not the National Labor Relations Board. NATO has been protecting the free world for 49 years. It's totally irrational to squander that leadership by tampering with the alliance."

—Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (*New York Times*, April 30, 1998), condemns a minor "tampering" with the alliance, while himself advocating that NATO be tampered with by changing its membership, extending it into a new region, and subordinating its military role to a political one.

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Too Impressive to be Real

Mark Falcoff

Benjamin Welles, *Sumner Welles: FDR's Global Strategist* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 437 pp., $35.

Irvin F. Gellman, *Secret Affairs: Franklin Roosevelt, Cordell Hull and Sumner Welles* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 499 pp., $39.95.

IN LATE 1933—and for a decade thereafter—pedestrians passing by the State Department (now the Old Executive Office Building) were treated to a spectacle promptly at 9:30 each work day morning. A chauffeured Rolls Royce would glide to a halt at the southeast corner, and an impeccably tailored gentleman would alight from the car. If, as in this case, it was winter, he would be wearing a double-breasted overcoat and brown fedora and bearing a cane. He would briskly ascend the granite steps and hurry to his office. Behind him would lumber a portly chauffeur, who would hand the gentleman's briefcase to a waiting State Department usher.

The arriving official was, unmistakably, Benjamin Sumner Welles, undersecretary of state and arguably the most important figure in American foreign policy during the first three administrations of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Indeed, so central was Welles to U.S. foreign policy during those years that it has remained something of a mystery to the uninitiated why he never ascended to the top rung of the department, even after his equally long-lived chief, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, finally retired in late 1944. For years we have been awaiting a biography that would clarify these and other questions about Welles' long and spectacular career. Now, nearly four decades after his death, we have two. The first is by Welles' son Benjamin, who for decades was one of the leading foreign correspondents of the *New York Times*; the other, which is actually a multiple biography of Welles and his contemporaries (mainly, though not exclusively, of Roosevelt himself and Cordell Hull), is the work of Irwin E. Gellman, previously known for his studies of American diplomatic history.

For some years the American scholarly community has been awash with rumors about the fate of Welles' personal papers, and particularly about the unwillingness of his heirs to allow independent researchers access to them. The excuse, so it ran, was that Benjamin Welles himself was planning a biography of his father. But the project itself was so long delayed in publication that many began to think that the literary project in question was entirely fictitious—a dodge to prevent prying eyes from intruding into some of the embarrassing aspects of Welles' personal life. With the publication of *Sumner Welles* we can see that those allegations were entirely without foundation; drawing not only on personal papers but also on interviews with family friends and even descendants of his father's enemies, Benjamin Welles has provided a very complete portrait, a significant contribution to scholarship in its own right. Far from avoiding unpleasantries, he actually begins the book by putting his ugliest cards on the table—relating more or less in full what is known of an episode that allegedly took place on a train carrying a presidential delegation back to Washington from the funeral of House Speaker William Bankhead in 1940.

On that occasion, Welles, drunk and under the influence of barbiturates, supposedly propositioned (without success) several

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members of the dining car staff, all of whom in that era were, of course, black males. Although the episode led to an FBI investigation and was eventually leaked to Washington social and political circles, it was not until 1943 that Welles' many enemies in Congress, the State Department, and elsewhere succeeded in bringing about his resignation.

Such scorched-earth tactics against one's rivals and political opponents are a familiar feature of life in Washington. There is, however, one important difference: a half century ago no newspaper would print a word of the charges against Welles, even after, as Gellman recounts, Hull rather indelicately (and illegally) showed the FBI file to James Reston of the *New York Times*. Indeed, it was not until 1956 that two of Welles' enemies—one of them William Bullitt, former ambassador to the Soviet Union and to France—managed to plant the story of Welles' alleged sexual tastes in *Confidential*, a scurrilous precursor of today's (comparatively tame) supermarket tabloids. This was hardly the best way to remember Welles and his contribution to American diplomacy, so we can be grateful that his son's long-deferred biographical memorial has finally arrived.

BENJAMIN Sumner Welles was born to a well-to-do Massachusetts Republican family in 1892 and received the same kind of education—Groton and Harvard—as the President he was later to serve. Indeed, the Welles and Roosevelt families were so close that young Sumner was a page at the wedding of Eleanor and Franklin. Already as an adolescent he had mastered French and German, largely from periods of residence in Europe with his parents. He grew to be tall, handsome, self-assured, and extremely attractive to women. In 1915, recently graduated from Harvard, he married Esther Slater, heiress to a Massachusetts textile fortune. Shortly thereafter he passed the foreign service examination with a 93 percent score and was posted to Japan. The experience, though brief, was in many ways fundamental to Welles' subsequent world outlook. He became convinced that Japan represented a long-term threat to American interests, and during the 1930s was one of the very few officials in Washington who took seriously its expansion into Manchuria.

His second assignment, to Buenos Aires, 1917-19, was equally formative. He had already decided to make Latin America his area specialty, an unusual choice among ambitious American diplomats of that time (or now, for that matter). He quickly added Spanish to his battery of languages, and made himself entirely at home with an upper class as refined and worldly as his own. Argentina was then the last redoubt of British influence in South America; indeed, insiders in London casually referred to it as the "sixth dominion." As a result, much of Welles' time there was spent trying to counteract the activities of British intelligence, whose mission was not merely to eliminate German economic influence but to forestall American entry into markets temporarily closed to the United Kingdom due to a shortage of merchant shipping and other wartime exigencies. (A somewhat similar double game was played by Whitehall during the Second World War, a fact that Welles found impossible to impress upon the opaque, provincial Hull, who insisted on venting his spleen on the Argentines.)

The election of Warren G. Harding in 1920 put Charles Evans Hughes at the helm of the State Department, a fortunate outcome for Welles, inasmuch as Hughes was a friend both of his family and that of his wife. But Welles' rapid advance in the service was due to demonstrated merit; he actually became acting chief of the Latin American division in 1920, several months before Hughes' accession. As Undersecretary Bainbridge Colby wrote, Welles was "brilliant, tireless. When there is work to be done—the clock does not exist." Another observer thought Welles was "overwhelmed by his own dignity." Both were probably right.

During his period at the Latin American division Welles began an affair with Mathilde

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Townsend Gerry, the immensely wealthy wife of a Democratic senator from Rhode Island. In 1923, wounded by her husband's infidelity, Esther Welles sued for divorce; the following year Harding's successor, Calvin Coolidge, who did not approve of divorced people, dismissed Welles from the foreign service. After a long and passionate courtship Mathilde finally left her husband and married Welles. Following a prolonged honeymoon in Paris, the newlyweds returned to Washington and established residence in Mathilde's palatial townhouse on Massachusetts Avenue (today the Cosmos Club). During 1927-28 Welles wrote *Naboth's Vineyard*, a two-volume history of the Dominican Republic, a country he had come to know well as a mediator of contending factions during his Latin American watch in the early 1920s. He also built a country estate at Oxon Hill, Maryland, entered Maryland politics, and renewed contact with Franklin D. Roosevelt, who, having recovered from his first bout of polio, was preparing to re-enter public life.

Indeed, during these years Welles became the most influential voice in the Democratic Party on Latin American issues, which in this period centered on debt collection, intervention, and the politics of recognition. Under the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1904), the United States took it upon itself to intervene in the financial affairs of some of the smaller Caribbean states with a view to forestalling European intervention to collect unpaid obligations. As a result, by the 1920s customs receiverships or other forms of veiled protectorate existed in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Nicaragua, often under the watchful bayonets of the U.S. Marines. In Cuba, the United States arrogated to itself the right to intervene under the Platt Amendment (1901) to preserve "life, liberty, and property"—a privilege that Washington had exercised no fewer than three times prior to FDR's inauguration in 1933.

Both Roosevelt and Welles believed, quite rightly, that armed intervention did not resolve the basic problem of political instability in these countries. Moreover, once U.S. troops were introduced, under whatever fiction, it was virtually impossible to withdraw them without losing face. The solution, they believed, was a combination of diplomacy and concrete economic benefits. On the one hand, the United States should avoid unilateral actions whenever possible and consult with the Latin American "majors" (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Chile); on the other, positive steps—lower tariffs to provide U.S. markets for Latin American exports, education, and constitutional rule—should be taken to create an environment in which intervention of any kind would prove unnecessary. This was the germ of FDR's subsequent Good Neighbor Policy.

The issue of diplomatic recognition was a major point of division between Welles and Roosevelt, on the one hand, and the Republicans on the other. Under President Wilson, the United States refused to send ambassadors to Latin American governments that had come to power by force and violence. Coolidge and Hoover reversed this course, and were criticized by their opponents for, in effect, propping up dictators. However, Latin American governments of whatever provenance adhered to the Estrada doctrine, which granted automatic recognition to any regime in effective control of national territory. Indeed, as Welles was later to learn, the use of recognition to express support or disapproval of any Latin American government—regardless of its qualities or lack of them—was deeply resented by our southern neighbors as a veiled form of intervention.

This last point was brought home to Welles with a vengeance in 1933, when President Roosevelt sent him to Cuba as ambassador to mediate between the dictator Gerardo Machado and his enemies. Once on the island, Welles realized that Machado's days were numbered, and saw his task as one of persuading the Cuban strongman to step down so that new elections could take place in an orderly fashion. Before this could happen, however, the Cuban armed forces sent Machado packing. Unfortunately for Welles,

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his hand-picked provisional president, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, never took hold. Within days of his assumption the non-commissioned officers of the Cuban army ousted their superiors and—horror of horrors—linked up with the Student Directorate at Havana University. This unholy alliance replaced Céspedes with a physiologist and professor of surgery, Dr. Ramón Grau San Martín.

Welles' steadfast refusal to recognize Grau's government led to a division within the student-soldier coalition; eventually, Sergeant-Stenographer Fulgencio Batista reached an understanding with the American ambassador, dispensed with Grau, and produced a civilian puppet sufficiently palatable to Welles' taste. Batista thus became "our man in Havana", and remained so for the next twenty-five years. This episode, recounted at considerable length in both books, reflects little credit on Welles. In spite of his son's attempt to provide a balanced appraisal, it seems clear that his management of the Cuban upheaval of 1933 was the one great failure of his career, one for which we (and, in a much more serious way, the Cuban people) are still paying the price. Roosevelt's subsequent embrace of the Estrada doctrine prevented a repetition of this fiasco, but, paradoxically, it also assured comfortable berths for Caribbean dictators for many years to come—not only Batista, but even more egregiously, Anastasio Somoza, Sr. in Nicaragua and Generalíssimo Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. If Welles' career to this point demonstrates one thing with clarity, it is the degree to which all U.S. policies in the circum-Caribbean—recognition or non-recognition, aid or embargo—were by their very nature double-edged swords.

Returning to Washington in late 1933, Welles was appointed assistant secretary of state for Latin America, and four years later, undersecretary of state (at that time the department's second-highest berth). This period was arguably the most productive of his career. Its principal highlight was the 1936 Buenos Aires Conference of American Republics, which laid the groundwork for subsequent meetings in Lima (1938) and Panama (1940), where Welles was able to work out a cooperative arrangement for hemispheric defense. Unlike Hull, Welles understood the considerations that led Argentina to remain aloof from the inter-American security community—matters relating to its economic and cultural ties to Western Europe, not (as Hull persistently imagined) sympathies for the Axis.

AS TIME WENT on, Roosevelt relied increasingly on Welles for all important foreign policy projects; it was Welles, not Hull, whom he dispatched to Europe in 1940 to sound out Hitler and Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier on the prospects for peace. Likewise, it was Welles, not Hull, who accompanied Roosevelt aboard a battleship off the coast of Newfoundland in 1941, and who produced the draft of what the world later came to know as the Atlantic Charter. Once the United States entered the war, Welles' portfolio expanded to include relations with the Free French and with Chaim Weizmann and the Jewish Agency, as well as plans for a postwar organization to keep the peace. By 1942 or 1943, Hull had become something of a figurehead secretary—a stark contrast to his workaholic deputy, who enjoyed the President's intimate confidence. When asked why he preferred this peculiar arrangement, Roosevelt said of Welles, "One, I trust him. Two, he doesn't argue with me. Three, he gets things done."

Hull's problem was not indolence so much as physical incapacity. Gellman's book reveals that for many years the secretary had suffered from tuberculosis, a disease at that time so dread that all those who carried it felt obliged to keep the matter secret. FDR presumably knew about Hull's problem, but chose to keep him on anyway, not only because he needed the secretary's influence with Congress, where he had served for more than two decades, but also because Hull's image with the public was one of extraordinary gravitas. Aristocratically handsome, with

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a full thatch of silver-white hair, his appearance projected integrity, maturity, and moderation, much like Andy Hardy's father—also a judge—in the films of the period. Today such advantages would be undercut by television, which would clearly convey the fact that Hull wore an ill-fitting pair of false teeth and spoke with a lisp.

The secretary's limitations were many. He spoke no foreign languages; he had little experience of foreign travel; and except for a long-time interest in trade and tariffs, had no preparation for the substance of foreign relations. In his own mind (and even more, that of his socially ambitious wife[1]), he was the ideal successor to FDR, even though he spent much of the latter's third term at the Bethesda Naval Hospital or at various spas for distinguished invalids. Inevitably, his outsized vanity clashed with that of his deputy, and eventually Hull linked up with other enemies of Welles—most notably Ambassador Bullitt, who himself aspired to be Hull's successor.

Shortly after the train incident Bullitt went to FDR to confront him with what he believed to be the facts of the case. Roosevelt, whose own marriage was somewhat irregular, and who in any event felt a certain sense of class loyalty to Welles, was unimpressed. He announced that he would assign a bodyguard to Welles so that such incidents could not occur in the future, and, to placate Bullitt, named him a special assistant to Hull. Unfortunately for Welles, this did not put an end to the matter. Thanks to a whispering campaign, within a matter of months all official Washington knew (or thought it knew) something of the undersecretary's private life. Meanwhile, Arthur Krock of the *New York Times* repeatedly fed his readers with stories of the "mess at the State Department"—the inability of Welles to get along with his chief. The proximate cause of Welles' resignation, however, was Hull's insistence in August 1943 that Roosevelt choose between the two of them. Fearful of losing a major political asset and already weakened by the strain of wartime leadership, the President finally caved in.

At the time Welles was only fifty-four years old and at the height of his powers. Unfortunately for him, his diplomatic career was definitively over. In the years immediately after World War II he became a noted columnist, radio commentator, and author. Two of his books, *Time for Decision* (1944) and *Where We Are Heading* (1946), became best-sellers, and he was in high demand on the lecture circuit. As time went on, however, depressed by the course of the Cold War and his own personal situation, he lapsed into alcohol and drugs, particularly after the death of Mathilde in 1949. In 1951 he married socialite Harriet Post, whom he had known since childhood. The final decade makes for melancholy reading. He died in 1961 of cancer of the pancreas, probably the product of a lifetime of excessive drinking.

WELLES WAS a difficult and contradictory figure. *Time* magazine described him in a cover article as "too impressive to be real: glacially dignified, ramrod stiff, and reserved as a box at the opera." But he was also, *Time* added, "precise, imperturbable, accurate, honest, sophisticated, thorough, cultured, traveled, and financially independent."

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[1]Who had a skeleton of her own in the closet. According to Gellman, Mrs. Hull was half-Jewish. At that time, we are told, to have a wife of such ancestry was a serious disability for any politician with national ambitions, so great a disability, indeed, that it was not canceled out even by Mrs. Hull's conspicuously active membership in the Episcopal Church. Even allowing for the changes that have occurred in American society over the past sixty years, particularly attitudes toward persons of Jewish ancestry, Gellman's appraisal simply beggars belief. He even pushes the idea further by claiming that Hull avoided any involvement in efforts to rescue European Jewry during World War II for fear that such efforts might be traced to urgings of his wife—who, at least in Gellman's telling, would be the last person on earth to exert such pressures.

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With his guards-officer mustache, London-tailored clothes, and retinue of servants, chauffeurs, and bottlewashers, he could not help but irritate some of his contemporaries and provoke envy and resentment on the part of many more.

On the other hand, he was a remarkably creative and worldly member of the U.S. foreign policy establishment—one of those quintessential dead white males whose departure we are now instructed to celebrate. To have shaped the Good Neighbor Policy, drafted the Atlantic Charter, and managed much of American diplomacy during World War II is a record any functionary might well envy, regardless of his social or ethnic origins. Gellman's very full portraits of Hull, Bullitt, and other foreign policy players during the New Deal and World War II provide an instructive contrast, one that suggests that Welles was, indeed, almost too impressive to be real. □

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Bearish on Teddy

Charles R. Kesler

H.W. Brands, *T.R.: The Last Romantic* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), 897 pp., $35.

IT IS DIFFICULT to write a bad book about Theodore Roosevelt, but even more difficult to write a really good one. H.W. Brands, a professor of history at Texas A&M, deserves congratulation on his new one-volume biography, an honest, enjoyable, sympathetic portrait of our twenty-sixth president. Aside from a melodramatic prologue and some unfortunate bows to modern psychology, Brands provides a straightforward narrative of Roosevelt's life, letting T.R. speak for himself and allowing his contemporaries to provide commentary. The result is a vivid character study, stronger on his life than on his times, but engrossing throughout. The book appears in a season of renewed interest in the Republican Roosevelt, not least because of the conservative debate over "national greatness" sparked by David Brooks and William Kristol, in which Roosevelt figures prominently as a patron saint of American nationalism and energetic government.

T.R. was a phenomenon, "a force of nature", as countless friends as well as enemies called him. His character, at once exasperating and endearing, helped to make politics interesting again for Americans who still lived in the shadow of the Civil War, sheltered but dominated by the great men and achievements of the mid-nineteenth century. William Jennings Bryan, the other galvanizing politician of Roosevelt's era, was a much less interesting figure in his own right, and his platform of debt relief through rampant monetary inflation could hardly be called high-minded. So in an age when public attention focused more on industrialists and financiers like Jay Gould, John D. Rockefeller, and J.P. Morgan than on politicians, and when politicians themselves were often cogs in political machines run by better known or more notorious bosses, Roosevelt stood out. His ranching, hunting, birdwatching, book writing, politicking, bullying, flag waving, soldiering, and canal-building reminded Americans that life

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was about more than getting and spending, and that happiness and duty were not mutually exclusive. T.R. was living proof that politics at its best was something higher—both more fun and more serious—than economics.

Part of the fun (and the seriousness) was Roosevelt's talent for invective. He was not a great writer, but he could turn a phrase, particularly if it were acerbic: he was a virtuoso of vituperation. Brands provides many examples: the opponents of the Panama Canal treaty were "a small body of shrill eunuchs"; the British ambassador, Roosevelt confided, "seems to have a brain of about eight guinea-pig power"; Bryan was "the cheapest faker we have ever had proposed for President"; journalist Joseph Pulitzer was "one of those creatures of the gutter of such unspeakable degradation that to him even eminence on a dunghill seems enviable." And surveying Woodrow Wilson's neutrality policy, T.R. commented, "We are passing through a thick streak of yellow in our national life."

Roosevelt was certainly "judgmental", as we would say today, which is one reason why reading him (and about him) is such a tonic. But the principles behind his judgments were not always reliable. Of these underlying moral and intellectual doctrines, Brands says very little—characteristically, he provides us with T.R.'s grades at Harvard, but not the contents of his courses. What Brands does vouchsafe about Roosevelt's principles is entirely conventional, bound up as it is in the tired account of Progressivism as a more or less natural outgrowth of American social and economic conditions. For decades, this lazy man's Marxism (there are several varieties of it, depending on whether the Progressives were reforming democratic capitalism in order to preserve it or transcend it) has commanded the mainstream of American historiography. Yet T.R.'s principles are at issue again in the current debate over "national greatness" conservatism, when, to say the least, socio-economic conditions are vastly different from those of the 1890s. So the principles themselves need to be revisited: Do today's conservatives have anything to learn from T.R.?

Like many of those who lived through the Civil War, Roosevelt (born 1858) was impressed by how much of peaceful political life depended on victory in war, and thus on the readiness of citizens to fight and die for their country or, as he put it, their "race." Addressing the Naval War College in 1897, he emphasized that "no national life is worth having if the nation is not willing, when the need shall arise, to stake everything on the supreme arbitrament of war, and to pour out its blood, its treasure, and tears like water rather than submit to the loss of honor and renown." Indeed, he declared, "No triumph of peace is quite so great as the supreme triumphs of war." This statement would seem to contradict the traditional, and reasonable, view that the purpose of war is to secure a just peace; that the triumphs of war exist for the sake of the triumph of peace. Roosevelt's words implied either that peace was for the sake of war, or that peace and war were more continuous than they might seem. Peace would then be only an interruption of war, and war would be the fundamental phenomenon. "Cowardice in a race, as in an individual, is the unpardonable sin", T.R. told the assembled officers. Cowardice—not injustice—is the capital vice of society.

Roosevelt was a fervent believer in justice, of course, but he saw justice in the context of comprehensive struggle. To be specific, he was a kind of Social Darwinist who saw the world divided into competing racial and national groups, some more advanced or civilized than others. This did not mark him as odd or atavistic—far from it, for this was the latest thing in social science, and he had studied it on his own and at Harvard University and Columbia Law School. He preferred the white race because it was his own and because it was the most civilized in the world, and among the whites he preferred the English-speaking peoples (descended from Teutonic stock, to be sure) for the same reasons. "Nineteenth-century democracy needs no

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more complete vindication for its existence", he once wrote, "than the fact that it has kept for the white race the best portions of the New Worlds' surface, temperate America and Australia." Democracy had earned this honor because aristocratic governments, by their nature, would have wanted to import slaves or manual workers (blacks or Chinese, in the instant cases) into these vast countries; but "democracy, with the clear instinct of race selfishness, saw the race foe, and kept out the dangerous alien." At least the democrats tried to.

Progress was not necessarily permanent, however, and despite his belief that acquired characteristics could be inherited, Roosevelt worried that the American race and other advanced races might backslide. For "a rich nation which is slothful, timid, or unwieldy is an easy prey for any people which still retains those most valuable of all qualities, the soldierly virtues." And he worried also that the civilized races would not reproduce themselves ("No race has any chance to win a great place unless it consists of good breeders as well as of good fighters").

Still, once blacks, Chinese, Slavs, and members of other races had become incorporated into American life, they could and should become members of the American race, and Roosevelt was a vigorous proponent of Americanization as the means to this end. The rule among democratic citizens was equality before the law, and he believed firmly in that, too. Actually, it was not unusual for Social Darwinism in America to bend in this liberal or humane direction, though it did so for diverse reasons. In Roosevelt's case the explanation was clear: On the basis of the sentiments of his political heroes—George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—he insisted that in American democracy rights attached to individual human beings, not to classes or racial groups; that the principles of right and wrong ran "at right angles" to such social groups; and consequently that Americans were bound together as a single people or race, united by and in a common good.

His Americanism did not entirely redeem his Social Darwinism, but his esteem for the nation's heroes saved Roosevelt from the worst consequences of the dogma of social evolution. His admiration for Washington and Lincoln was so genuine and deep that T.R. thought the purpose of his political career was to restore the spirit of Lincoln to the party of Lincoln. There was nothing like this love in Woodrow Wilson's thought, in which the new historical-comparative political science rendered obsolete all such appeals to the past. (Although Wilson did admire the classic parliamentary debates of British history, he realized soon enough that these could not be reproduced in modern America.) Roosevelt's love of moral and civic virtue was genuine, too. He preached "the strenuous life", partly because in the struggle for existence among peoples and races Americans needed a substitute for the frontier life that used to keep them physically and emotionally fit; but he also promoted it because courage was healthy and noble, in and of itself.

Inevitably, however, T.R.'s attempt to combine Washington and Lincoln with John Burgess and other Darwinian and quasi-Darwinian theorists came a cropper. Try as he might to harmonize them, the result was intellectual confusion, no matter how many discrete moral points they happened to agree on. Roosevelt admitted as much: "My code is that duty must be done and that the doing of it must be the chief reward and often the only reward, and though I could not very clearly give my reasons why I do hold this code, yet I am perfectly sure it is the right code to hold."

There was a cost, in other words, to the gentleman's disagreement in his head. The cost was, in the first place, intellectual. Despite his emphatic respect for Washington and Lincoln, he almost never used their language of natural rights and the social contract to describe America, because this language and its political theory had been discredited by his other authorities—the theorists of Social Darwinism and of the English and German historical school. So he was reduced to admiring his heroes for their greatness of

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soul, wholly apart from the ends or the understanding of justice to which they devoted that greatness. Brands regards T.R. as "the last Romantic" because he saw the world as clearly divided between good and evil, which though true is hardly a definition of Romanticism. The true Romanticism in Roosevelt's soul was his exaltation of great passions and great struggles at the expense of reason and the rational harmony of good character.

But the cost he paid was also moral and political. His larger political doctrines were always blurry, as Brands admits. T.R. claimed to be "a Jeffersonian in my genuine faith in democracy and popular government", but "a Hamiltonian in my governmental views, especially with reference to the need of the exercise of broad powers by the National Government." Though he shared Jefferson's "faith" in democracy, he did not share Jefferson's reasons for that faith. Though he embraced Hamilton's view of the "need" to exercise national powers, he rejected Hamilton's explanation of the grounds and limits of those powers. In a fine study of this question (one awaiting publication in a forthcoming book), political scientist Randall (Lance) Robinson has shown how different are Hamilton's and Roosevelt's views of executive power under the Constitution. Hamilton insisted that the president's broad powers were grounded in his constitutional authority and duty, were subject to the exceptions and qualifications spelled out in the Constitution, were limited to objects that clearly were the responsibility of the national government, and had to be interpreted in conformity with the rest of the Constitution and the general principles of free government.

By contrast, Roosevelt argued that the president was "a steward of the people bound actively and affirmatively to do all he could for the people, and not to content himself with the negative merit of keeping his talents undamaged in a napkin." This meant that the president had the right and duty "to do anything that the needs of the Nation demanded unless such action was forbidden by the Constitution or by the laws." In short, the president's authority came directly from the people, not the Constitution, and it was his peculiar job to discern and satisfy "the needs of the Nation" out of the general, almost plenary, grant of power given him by the people. Congress and the courts became secondary bodies—constraints on the executive's application of national will, not co-equal institutions designed to deliberate on national needs, to distinguish reason from passion in popular opinion, or to teach reverence for the Constitution. Brands fails to recognize how novel T.R.'s understanding of executive power really was.

To be sure, Roosevelt's actions as president were hardly as peremptory as his theory would suggest. He launched and won a major antitrust suit (against the Northern Securities Company, a railroad trust); cajoled the coal mining companies into arbitrating a coal strike; established the Department of Commerce and Labor; endowed the Interstate Commerce Commission with the power to set railroad shipping rates; regulated the meat-packing industry; expanded national forest preserves and parks; convened a White House conference to eliminate foul play in college football; and attempted, unsuccessfully, to foist simplified spelling on the federal government. Some of these efforts were more dubious than others, but none aimed to subvert the Constitution. In foreign affairs, of course, he was more daring. He kept the Kaiser out of Venezuela; maintained American administration of the Philippines; tacitly approved a revolution in Colombia and then proceeded to win Congress's permission to build the Panama Canal; issued the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine; midwifed successful negotiations to end the Russo-Japanese War and to settle the status of Morocco; sent the Marines to keep the peace in Cuba; and dispatched the Great White Fleet to circumnavigate the globe. In short, he expanded executive authority in foreign policy, but this was a sphere into which

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executive power had a natural tendency and a certain constitutional warrant to roam.

His moderation abandoned him in 1912, however, when he split and then deserted the Republican Party rather than endorse the renomination of his successor and former friend, William Howard Taft. Roosevelt campaigned on a Progressive agenda that was aimed squarely against traditional American constitutionalism: His call for popular referendums by which voters could overturn the decisions of state supreme courts was widely regarded as a preliminary to attacking the Supreme Court itself. Here his fluid, Darwinian view of political institutions apparently bested his Lincolnian attachment to law. T.R.'s sober friend Elihu Root remarked, "Theodore has gone off upon a perfectly wild program, most of which he does not really believe in, although of course at this moment he thinks he does." Root and Henry Cabot Lodge, two of Roosevelt's closest and most conservative allies, broke with him over this campaign.

WHAT LESSONS, then, should conservatives today draw from T.R.? His truculent character cannot be imitated, but it is a kind of inspiration, manfully leading us out of the Slough of Despond and away from base materialism. In foreign affairs, Roosevelt's assertions of U.S. national interest and his keen grasp of geostrategy were inherited and brilliantly revised by the Reagan administration, and must be components of any creditable conservative movement. Roosevelt counted also on an honorable foreign policy's bracing effects on national character, a connection warmly endorsed and exploited by Ronald Reagan, and today, under different circumstances, urged by Brooks and Kristol. On the domestic front, we have a much better understanding of the limits of antitrust policy and government regulation than T.R. had, but his eloquent and repeated refusal to tolerate (at least from others!) the politics of class warfare would still be a good model for Republican orators.

On the fundamental principles of our government, alas, Roosevelt is not a worthy guide. Brooks and Kristol ask, "How can Americans love their nation if they hate its government?", and they look to T.R., at least partly, in order to show how vigorous nationalism and energetic government should go together. The question is an important one, and Kristol and Brooks are right to conclude that, in the long run, loving our country and hating our government cannot coexist. But a certain amount of distrust of the government is a healthy thing; in fact is a great source of American humor and even a kind of virtue—so long as this skepticism or distrust is subsumed under a love or reverence for the Constitution. If Americans were taught—or persuaded—again to love the Constitution and its principles, they would remember why and how the national government should be limited. And they would discover why *only* a limited government can be energetic, i.e., properly energetic in pursuit of the few, great objects confided to the national administration. It is the bloated, arrogant, trivial, and unlawful character of government today that invites hatred. In order to build respect for our national government, it has to be made constitutional again.

Theodore Roosevelt is no great ally in this effort. After all, he helped (in principle more than in practice, granted) to detach government from the Constitution and to make the national administration a general steward of the people's well-being. Yet in one respect, at least, he was on to something. Following his advice more faithfully than he did himself, conservatives today should reacquaint themselves with Washington and Lincoln, and think through how these statesmen's virtues—and their principles—may help us come to grips with our own predicament. In the long run, that may be T.R.'s most sensible contribution to "national greatness." □

Charles R. Kesler is director of the Henry Salvatori Center at Claremont-McKenna College.

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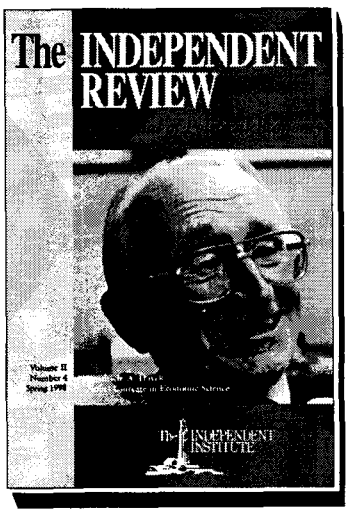

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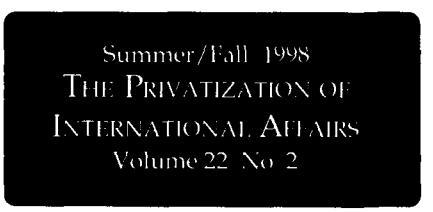

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An Inner Circle of One:

ROBERT TUCKER dissects the relationships between Woodrow Wilson and his closest foreign policy advisers with characteristic learning, insight, and style ["An Inner Circle of One: Woodrow Wilson and His Advisers", Spring 1998]. So astute are his judgments, in fact, that one yearns for his take on the bigger picture. For what Tucker does not give us, at least in this piece, is a discussion of how the personalities and relationships he describes combined with broader structural factors to produce first American neutrality and then American belligerency.

The response of the United States to the outbreak of war in 1914 seemed obvious: remain uninvolved. Had the war not settled into a stalemate, that is precisely what would have happened. But when the conflict became a war of attrition, American "noninvolvement" became impossible—because *any* substantial commercial and financial relations between America and Europe were bound to affect the balance of resources somehow. As Tucker notes, "Despite its neutral status . . . America was the holder of the balance of power in the world conflict from the outset."

Three economic flows were particularly important: U.S. trade with the Central Powers and other Continental nations, financing for the Allied war effort by private U.S. institutions, and U.S. trade with the Allies. British suppression of the first caused frictions; the second permitted the Allies to remain in the war while tarnishing American neutrality in German eyes; and German attacks on the third brought the United States into the conflict for real.

The logic of war leads belligerents to pursue their political and military goals with whatever tools are at hand. For Britain this meant using control of the seas to cut off German access to the outside world. This created conflict with the United States but did not produce a break in U.S.-Allied relations, largely because the British saw the possibility and were careful to avoid it and because key American interests had a stake in booming U.S.-Allied trade.

Germany, meanwhile, sought through submarine warfare to do to Britain what Britain was doing to Germany through the blockade: cut the enemy off from the outside world. But this necessitated sinking commercial shipping and thus killing civilians directly (rather than indirectly, like the British). Even worse, it involved killing neutral citizens, including Americans. The German strategy had a certain logic, but lacked the British strategy's outstanding quality of prudence. In late 1916, when stalemate seemed to offer Germany no choice other than a compromise peace or a gamble on the submarine to achieve outright victory, the German government chose the latter option. Before this occurred, nothing House, Lansing, Page or anybody else did could change the mind of the President or the country at large regarding entrance into the war; after it, their opinions were largely superfluous, and in a few months the United States joined the battle.

While the United States remained on the sidelines, Wilson's efforts to end the conflict through negotiations and a "peace without victory" were doomed to failure. He sought international stability, a harmonious liberal trading order, and eventually a grand international organization permitting nations to transcend power politics. These goals did not change in 1917; rather, Wilson and the nation came to identify German militarism as the main threat to this vision, a threat which had to be eliminated so that the original aims could be achieved. The Allies, however, did

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not seem to share America's high-minded purposes, and therefore they too represented a threat to the achievement of American war aims—something Wilson made plain by joining their coalition only as an "associate." As American strength tipped the military balance during 1918 and made German defeat inevitable, the stage was thus set for triangular diplomacy during the war's endgame. Germany would naturally try to escape from the conflagration with as soft a punishment as possible. The Allies would seek the opposite result, trying to satisfy their own passions, greed, and fears. Wilson, holding the whip hand, would try to reform Germany while playing both sides off against each another and midwifing a new world.

Unfortunately in geopolitics, unlike geometry, triangles are the least stable of all configurations.... The tragedy of Versailles—of hapless American attempts to forestall Allied impositions on a prostrate German Republic—was merely the final working out of the tensions inherent in the war's closing act. Like America's policy throughout the war itself, it was shaped in large part by the underlying structures of relative power.

None of this contradicts Tucker's article, of course. But it does suggest that what we need from him most are judgments about the relative importance of factors at various levels of analysis in accounting for American policy choices, and explicit counterfactual analysis demonstrating just how and why "this period of history might have turned out differently." Only then can we place the relationships between Wilson and his advisers in their proper historical perspective.

Gideon Rose
Council on Foreign Relations

Europe on the Brink:

THE NATIONAL INTEREST is to be commended on enabling the American public to read Michael Portillo's article ["Europe on the Brink: Democratic Values and the Single Currency", Spring 1998]. As an academic student of these matters, in contrast to Mr. Portillo's active involvement in British politics, I find nothing to quarrel with in his analysis. It remains a mystery, however, why American administrations of both parties have for so long taken the view that the creation of a "United States of Europe" is both in Europe's interest and in America's. Indeed, successive American spokesmen have urged Britain to ignore the instinctive unwillingness of the British people to take part in such a foredoomed enterprise, and have argued against all the evidence that Britain's relationship with the United States would be strengthened rather than weakened by its disappearance as an independent political entity.

Writing in mid-March 1998, it looks almost certain that despite all the evidence of a growing undercurrent of opposition, particularly in Germany, eleven countries will go ahead with the introduction of a single currency in 1999. Given all the problems that Mr. Portillo points to, and the patent absurdity of imagining that "convergence" can have a real meaning among economies so diverse, or that we shall see either the mobility of labor or the willingness of the richer participants to finance the poorer ones on the model of what happens in a true federation, one can only hope that the system collapses before it does the possible damage to peace and security to which Mr. Portillo calls attention.

At the same time, the British government is embarking on an expensive campaign to pave the way for a positive referendum on British membership after the next election. British taxpayers' money as well as European funds will play an important part.... In the end Britain will say "no"—it is a pity that in order to secure this result we should be diverted from the many important economic and social problems that a more serious government would now be tackling.

Lord Beloff
House of Lords

ALTHOUGH THEY are valid, all the arguments in Michael Portillo's

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article have been made numerous times before by many other people, including even pro-Europeans. Only recently Hans Tietmeyer, the president of the Bundesbank, warned of the danger of tensions between EMU member states, as Mr. Portillo does.

In addition, his arguments are vitiated by his failure as a politician to act consistently with them. In the article, he says that the single currency undermines democracy; why, then, did he say on television recently that he "wished the euro well"? And if he thinks the euro is bad for European security and U.S. interests, why did he remain for five years a member of a government which refused to rule it out?

This was not just a sin of omission. When the Conservative Party was offered the chance to vote against EMU in 1995—when John Major resigned as party leader and was challenged by John Redwood over the European question—Mr. Portillo was one of the main architects of the defeat of the anti-EMU cause. He engineered Mr. Major's survival, and that of the disastrous agnostic line on EMU, by concluding a pact with the arch pro-European, Michael Heseltine. If Mr. Portillo had stated his opposition to EMU then, and drawn the consequences, he would have changed the course of history. Now it is too late.

Perhaps Mr. Portillo still does not realize how bad things really are. European integration is inspired by a deeply illiberal ideology—by the view that, if free, people and nations will inevitably fight each other. This is why Chancellor Kohl claims that the single currency is necessary to prevent war. It explains why the European Union seeks to put unaccountable and uncontrollable technocratic dirigisme in place of free government by law and public debate.

National political and constitutional structures, which are the very foundations of European liberties, are being abrogated by EU integration. They are not being replaced by any other clear constitutional order, but instead by a mish-mash of deliberately obscure lines of responsibility. Such an assault on the fundamental principles of democracy is surely worth a ministerial resignation, and not just an article in a learned journal....

John Laughland
Brussels

Portillo replies:

JOHN Laughland's book *The Tainted Source* is a remarkable piece of work and I drew on it in making the speech I gave in January, which was published in *The National Interest.* His qualifications for commenting on it are certainly as good as anyone's.

If we had retained a Conservative government in Britain there would not now be any risk of Britain's entering the single currency. The proposal would not have secured a majority in cabinet, and it would not have passed the House of Commons, given that the majority of the parliamentary Tory party was opposed. While we were in government, I knew that if we were succeeded by Labour, the way to entry would be opened wide. The rational course of action for anyone who wished to avoid British membership was to strive for a Conservative victory.

The greatest single impediment to a Tory win was the disunity of the party. I therefore worked to convince the Conservative Euroskeptics that they had won the argument on Europe within the party, and should back the compromise formula developed by the cabinet in the hopes of presenting a show of unity. I was entirely unsuccessful. In particular, Tory Members and candidates were spooked by the threat in their constituencies from the Referendum Party into declaring their outright opposition to membership, thus breaking with the agreed line, and so presenting the public with the image of a party in total chaos. The election result reflected that. In addition, the fact that Referendum candidates took votes from the Conservatives made the result for the Tories much worse, thus giving the Labour Party, which was sympathetic to the single currency, a much bigger

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majority than it would otherwise have had.

The continuing and unnecessary dissent within the Conservative Party during the election campaign, linked with the intervention of the Referendum Party, helped to usher in a government that wishes to enter the single currency, and is in a position to do so, in place of one that, given the balance of power in the Tory party, could not have done so.

NATO Expansion:

OWEN HARRIES in his lucid critique of NATO expansion ["The Dangers of Expansive Realism", Winter 1997/98] does not fully consider the very real security benefits that a robust enlarged NATO offers to its present and future members. In particular, he failed to appreciate the impact that NATO's engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina will have on developing a coherent approach to out-of-theater operations and cooperation with non-NATO members. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, NATO has developed a framework of cooperation with Russia that will have lasting consequences. Croatia has also benefited from this mission because it has worked closely with NATO on implementation of the Dayton Accords. Croatia's fundamental foreign policy objective is to become part of the major Euro-Atlantic economic, political, and security institutions, namely NATO and the European Union. NATO expansion is today a reality. Keeping the door open to membership and developing the transatlantic cooperation council and the Partnership for Peace program are crucial elements in this process.

Miomir Zuzul
Ambassador from Croatia

PROFESSOR Tucker ["Reflections of a Repentant Sinner", Spring 1998] has shifted from being a supporter of "limited NATO expansion" to an opponent, his uneasiness apparently prompted by the realization that "the Clinton administration seems never to have seriously considered a strategy of limited expansion", and that if its policy is indeed open-ended expansion, unnecessary risks and costs will be entailed. . . .

Mr. Tucker worries about the effect on Russia, but ignores the critical issue of dealing with a nuclear Russia. He believes that the President may have inadvertently miscalculated the real impact of NATO expansion on Russia's foreign policy and reformist prospects. There was nothing inadvertent. Clinton's decision to accelerate the timetable for NATO expansion was taken unilaterally, without consulting congressional leaders, let alone NATO allies or the American public, and without any impelling strategic or military considerations. It was a transparent bid for votes during the final two weeks of a bitterly contested election.

George F. Kennan goes to the heart of the consequences for Russia and Russian-American relations [Letters, Spring 1998]. He notes that efforts to justify NATO expansion on grounds of Russia's being "an inherently and incorrigibly expansionist" country are "distortions" and simplifications of tsarist and Soviet diplomatic history. Phobias seem to count more than facts. . . .

At the heart of Conrad Black's oversimplification of Europe's sad history in this century [Letters, Spring 1998] is his fear of U.S. disengagement. Engagement, however, does not require enlargement. If only his enthusiasm reflected the mood of all our West European allies (not just Germany), and was accompanied by their admission of the Central and East European countries to the European Union; and would that his invocation of "moral duty" found a readiness among them to assume the financial and military burden he consigns to the United States. . . . He lauds "the addition of sixty million Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians" as adding a "great deal of strategic strength to the Alliance." I question how dependent, resource-poor, militarily insignificant, economically less-developed countries can enhance NATO's security—particularly when there is no external threat to any of them. . . .

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Despite what the NATO-boosters have argued, the alternatives were never simply expand or wither away. A stable NATO would better have served U.S. national interests and those of the European countries as well. . . . The tragedy is that NATO expansion may well squander the very security and stability in Europe that it purports to promote.

Professor Alvin Z. Rubinstein
University of Pennsylvania

The Logic of Covert Action:

IN "The Logic of Covert Action" [Spring 1998] it is surprising that Drs. Berkowitz and Goodman focus first on deniability as an important aspect of covert action. The term covert action has long been used as a catch-all misnomer for many low-intensity conflict operations that the United States carries out with the knowledge of many international actors, if not with the detailed knowledge of most U.S. taxpayers. That deniability would reduce costs and accrue benefits for a foreign policy action has been an executive branch chimera not validated by actual events.

The Afghanistan effort, in which I had a role, is a case in point. Berkowitz and Goodman believe it was the deniability of this U.S. covert action operation that constrained Soviet options for ensuring that "history could not be reversed" in Afghanistan, as Leonid Brezhnev claimed. But deniability did not prevent the USSR from attempting to destabilize the government of Pakistan, nor did it mitigate the war scare regarding U.S. intentions that gripped the Kremlin in the mid-1980s. American and Soviet perceptions of the thresholds for nuclear confrontation come to mind as one better measure for understanding constraints on foreign policy actions, including covert action, during the Cold War.

The real strength of "The Logic of Covert Action" is its discussion of accountability. My experience with the democratic Iraqi opposition (the Iraqi National Congress) from 1993-96 has provided me with a list of U.S. policy failures that is different from that provided by Berkowitz and Goodman. However, I think they get the main point right: U.S. policymakers must be held more accountable to the American taxpayer and, by extension, more responsible to the foreign groups that are often a part of our covert action efforts. The events of August-September 1996, in which hundreds of Iraqi National Congress adherents were killed or captured in northern Iraq by the invading Iraqi army, with no credible U.S. response, should not be repeated.

Warren Marik
Former CIA operations officer

Berkowitz and Goodman reply:

"COVERT action" is defined by statute as activities undertaken by the U.S. government for which it does not acknowledge responsibility. We agree with Mr. Marik (and note in our article) that this deniability often stretches plausibility.

Nonetheless, it is official deniability—however thin—that allows political officials to evade accountability. It is also why covert actions such as the one in Iraq are subjected to insufficient sanity checks. From his comments, we think that Mr. Marik would agree on this general point, if not the specifics.

The End of Cheap Oil:

MR. CAMPBELL projects that, with the critical exception of the Middle East, the world is running out of oil ["Running Out of Gas: This Time the Wolf *is* Coming", Spring 1998]. He asks, "What will happen when Middle East producers reach the critical threshold [which he estimates at 30 percent of world supplies] which will enable them to virtually set the price of oil?" Campbell concludes that within a few years the world will face a very powerful cartel (presumably replacing OPEC) able to dictate sky-high oil prices, and growing ever more powerful as a consequence of their huge oil reserves, while those of their competitors will soon peak and then decline.

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I believe that this neo-Malthusian doctrine with respect to oil is as misleading as were Malthus' projections with respect to the shortages of food for a growing world population. Campbell recognizes the role of technology but underrates its importance. Technological changes, especially in the last decade, have sharply reduced the cost of oil exploration and extraction, have increased substantially the success rate of drilling, as well as the recovery rate from existing oil fields. Deep sea drilling has greatly expanded the reserves in the Gulf of Mexico and in the North Sea. Technological changes have also improved overall energy efficiency and the displacement of oil by natural gas, which is far less polluting than oil. Unlike oil reserves, which are heavily concentrated in the Middle East, natural gas is widely diffused geographically. Between 1986 and 1996 world oil consumption rose by an annual average rate of only 1.4 percent, sharply lower than the 7.5 percent rate typical of the two decades preceding the oil shock of 1973.

Campbell asserts that "for every four barrels used, only one is found." This would imply that world reserves are declining rapidly. But British Petroleum estimates suggest the opposite, namely that between 1976-95 world reserves expanded greatly—by over two-thirds. The figures suggest that most of the increment in reserves took place during the last decade, much or most of it due to greater advances in the technology of oil supply. Indeed, Professor Peter Odell of Erasmus University in Holland was one of a handful of economists who, back in the 1970s and early 1980s, dissented sharply from the conventional view of OPEC dominance. In a recent paper . . . Odell concludes that "much oil will eventually be left in place unwanted, unmourned, and hence unrecovered." He's probably right. . . .

Eliyahu Kanovsky
Yeshiva University/Bar-Ilan University

THERE HAS BEEN a recent spate of warnings about an impending oil crisis due to physical constraints on long-term oil supply, of which Dr. Campbell's article is but one example....

Campbell has updated the work of M. King Hubbert and combined it with analyses of oil field discovery size to estimate total resources, then uses this to produce his apocalyptic view of non-OPEC production. However, my research into oil supply forecasting has found a number of recurring errors and demonstrated that because of data bias and omitted variables, Campbell's method is virtually guaranteed to produce a near-term peak and decline in oil production whenever it is used.

Indeed, his 1991 book made the same prediction of near-term falling oil production. After five years, his prediction was 8 mb/d too low, approximately the same as Saudi exports. In fact, he has had to increase his estimates of how much oil there is in the world and how high peak oil production will be; delay the date when it will decline; and make nearly every individual country's forecast more optimistic. This merely confirms that he has not corrected the Hubbert method and thus his current prediction should not be considered valid.

Frankly, world oil resources and non-OPEC supply will be more abundant than most people anticipate, and prices are likely to be under frequent pressure over the next decade (at least). However, this does not mean we are not vulnerable to another oil crisis, since such crises are short-term events caused by political disruptions of oil supply. It does mean that programs to encourage development of expensive oil substitutes will be a waste of money, just as they were in the 1970s.

Michael C. Lynch
Center for International Studies, M.I.T.

Campbell replies:

BOTH DRS. Kanovsky and Lynch make points worth discussing, but some of them are off the point of my essay and others beg correction.

First, I did not, and I do not, say that the world is "about to run out of oil", merely that most countries are close to peak, and this will have important political and economic impacts.

Second, I do not dismiss technology.

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Indeed, I believe that it will be fully needed to bring in the reserves and "yet-to-find" oil as currently estimated. But recovery rates have *not* significantly improved from technology. Most apparent reserve growth is instead due to a move from prudently conservative early estimates to more realistic ones based on what the wells are actually found to deliver. It suits companies in managing their risks and their financial assets to underreport the initial size of discoveries, and spread out the balance over time. For this and other reasons, it *is* true that the world finds about one barrel in new discovery for every four it produces.

One of these other reasons, as I tried to show in my essay, concerns the unreliability of relevant statistics. But Drs. Lynch and Kanovsky take published data at face value—notwithstanding the glaring anomalies that are obvious from the most cursory analysis. Dr. Lynch, who admits neither to direct knowledge or experience of the oil industry nor to access to reliable data, builds his case simply on what he perceives to be the errors of past forecasting. Naturally the numbers and ideas have changed over time as more knowledge of this exceedingly complex subject has come in. He dismisses any notion that oil resources may be finite, believing that technology will solve all.

Finally, it is worth noting that a recent report presented by the International Energy Agency to the G-8 energy ministers on March 31 unequivocally accepted the concept that oil resources are finite, and that peak production will occur near the midpoint of depletion. While there is room to debate the numbers, this assessment is basically the same as mine, and comes from the most authoritative international source there is. I hope that Dr. Lynch will reconsider his efforts to discredit serious studies of this subject, which is of great importance to mankind.

The Road Not Taken:

NEIL McInnes' essay ["The Road Not Taken: Hayek's Slippery Slope to Serfdom", Spring 1998] contains numerous flaws, but most notable is its mean-spiritedness. It's not just that McInnes almost invariably interprets Hayek's writings in the least charitable manner, nor that his essay is filled with serious errors (e.g., attributing Hayek's concern with evolved rules of order, such as the common law, to the allegation that he was a "lifelong Catholic", which is both factually incorrect and a bizarre misrepresentation of Hayek's reasons), but that McInnes fills his essay with mean and nasty swipes at a figure in every significant way his superior. On just one page (57), McInnes: offers a startling non sequitur, viz., that because the University of Chicago authorized *Reader's Digest* to condense *The Road to Serfdom* without fee, the book was "probably" being subsidized by big business, implying both that the University of Chicago is a part of "big business" (!!) and that Hayek's work had no intrinsic merit; refers to Hayek as a "cult figure" who "supposedly" influenced Reagan and Thatcher; and asserts that Hayek died "too far into his dotage to appreciate that his ideas had won out in the Soviet Union."

The last swipe was especially mean-spirited. In October of 1989 at a Cato Institute conference in Moscow I unveiled and presented a bust of Hayek to Yevgeny Primakov, then a Communist functionary and now Russian foreign minister. I wrote to Hayek about it, and he very graciously replied as follows:

> Dear Mr. Crane:
>
> I am afraid I still have to thank you for your letter of 16th October. I was not too well at the time at which it arrived and am afraid I have allowed a good deal of correspondence to accumulate unanswered.
>
> I am of course deeply pleased by the news and can only tell you how deeply grateful I am for all you have done. I could not imagine a more impressive symbol of the ultimate victory of our side in the long dispute of the principles of the free market, and will at the moment only say that I hardly expected to live to experience this.

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I hope before long to take an opportunity to express my gratitude to you in more adequate terms.

With profound gratitude,
Yours sincerely,
F.A. Hayek

I hope that I will be able to write such gracious letters when I am "far into my dotage." Throughout his long life Hayek was, in fact, always a gentleman, even in the face of small people like McInnes.

Ed Crane
President, Cato Institute

NEIL McInnes' essay is not entirely without merit, but it comes very close. A careful evaluation of *The Road to Serfdom* now that the threat of totalitarianism is almost eliminated (for the foreseeable future, at least) would be very much appreciated by thoughtful observers. Too bad the writer selected by *The National Interest* to take up the challenge was so poorly informed and so clearly intent on writing a hatchet job.

Let me address one small but very significant point: the centrality of the experience of National Socialism to Hayek's case against collectivism. McInnes implies that Hayek was sanguine about the Holocaust and the other crimes of National Socialism, which is quite frankly libelous. In a brilliant example of utterly loathsome innuendo, McInnes writes, "What drew much incredulity was Hayek's strange choice of Nazi Germany as the type of serfdom produced by economic planning. He had little else to say against it except that it practiced planning", and then implies that for Hayek "Nazi ideology" was merely "to be defined as an *economic* heresy" [his emphasis]. McInnes then goes on to give a thoroughly discredited interpretation of the National Socialist command economy as entirely necessitated by the war: "It should have been evident that a regime whose whole purpose was war would practice a command economy, *Wirtschaft unter Zwang*. Trying to frighten naughty little socialists by saying they would grow up to be wicked Nazis was poor rhetoric and it put many critics off the book."

As to the first point, it should be fairly clear that a Viennese liberal intellectual would be unlikely to be concerned solely with matters of "*economic* heresy" and indeed a look at Hayek's writings indicates an attitude of utter horror at the destruction of civilization by totalitarian regimes. McInnes implies that had the National Socialists adopted some other *economic* program, Hayek would have had no complaint against them. The fact that Hayek's English is sometimes rather stilted and convoluted (indeed, Germanic), rather than direct, impassioned, and denunciatory, is no evidence of a lack of revulsion against National Socialist criminality. It is a shame that this even needs to be addressed, but McInnes' despicable innuendoes are completely misleading. Hayek's point was indeed the opposite of what McInnes implies: not that economic planning is objectionable per se, but that even well-motivated economic planning, such as was being advocated in Britain at the time, leads to other undesirable consequences, among them the abolition of the rule of law and the reduction of the populace to serfdom. That is, after all, why the book was called *The Road to Serfdom*.

Regarding the second point, Hayek knew in the 1940s what any intelligent reader should know today: that National Socialism was an ideology that included, well, socialism as a part of its program, and that subjugation of the economy to state regimentation was part of that program from the beginning, rather than merely necessitated by the drive to war. As Avraham Barkai notes in his *Nazi Economics: Ideology, Theory, and Policy* (1990), "The scope and depth of state intervention in Nazi Germany had no peacetime precedent or parallel in any capitalist country, Fascist Italy included." It may seem odd to McInnes, writing in the comfort of 1998, that Hayek in the 1940s would choose to write about the system that had annexed his homeland and engulfed Europe in flames, but that just tells us much

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about McInnes' own lack of historical perspective. What makes the lack of perspective worse is McInnes' assertion, as if it were an unassailable fact, of a discredited historical error. His lack of understanding of the most basic points of Hayek's case makes his critique flimsy and of little value.

Tom G. Palmer
Cato Institute

McInnes replies:

THERE IS nothing in Mr. Palmer's fulminations that counts against my argument that Nazi Germany was a quite inappropriate case to illustrate Hayek's claim that nations slide into serfdom by way of piecemeal state intervention in free markets. The whole point of Barkai's book, which Palmer cites, is that the Nazi economy was *étatisé* from the start, because, says Barkai, "war had top political priority for the Nazi regime from its very beginnings." Barkai adds the nuance that war was not the sole objective; there were other ideological policies, but they too were put in place from the start. There was no drift, no winding road to serfdom, no cumulative planning failures, just political domination from the start. Besides, Barkai says (p. 248) that, "In spite of all the talk about 'German socialism'", there was none, and specifically there was no central planning authority. Hardly a good example for Hayek to choose.

I mentioned Hayek's Catholicism (which Mr. Crane wants to doubt) to defend him from the charge of destructive rationalism. Hayek said that religions "embody 'symbolic truths' about the necessities of social order"; and his Catholicism would be relevant to his belief "that a measure of 'uncritical' submission to social convention is an indispensable condition of stability as much as of liberty."

Hayek's letter to Mr. Crane in 1989 tells us nothing about his condition when the Soviet Union collapsed two years later. As to that, I rely on his disciple G.R. Steele who says (*The Economics of Fr. Hayek*, 1993): "It is to be regretted that, at the close of his life, he was unable to comprehend the extent of the collapse of the Soviet empire."

Inability to comprehend is no fault in a dying 92 year-old, but it's a shame when it sets in at (presumably) lesser ages. Messrs. Crane and Palmer proffer personalities rather than deal with my main argument; perhaps this is their way of conceding it. It is that moderate government intervention in free markets, notably social welfare, does not inexorably lead to political and cultural disaster, or to anything like serfdom. It certainly has a cost, in market impairment, but as long as it is kept within limits, it is a cost that for the past fifty years democracies have consistently voted to pay. It was mistaken of Hayek to say otherwise in 1944 and it would be fatuous to deny it today.

Too Much Memory:

HAVING LIVED in Belfast for seventy-two years and worked as a Catholic priest in it since 1949, I was astounded by Mr. Fox's recent misinterpretation of our situation ["Too Much Memory: A Beginner's Guide to the Irish Question", Winter 1997/98]. The Northern Ireland problem is that the British government has refused to create a democracy there during my lifetime. Europe in general escaped the toils of dictators and one-party governments only after the Second World War. Northern Ireland was one of the few one-party states to survive—because the British government ensured by force of arms and money that it would survive. The area has never had democratic rule.

Every effort to create it has been frustrated by a government that first of all created an intractable problem and then blamed the victims of it for their misfortune. That is the basic problem that Mr. Fox ignores. Protestants and Catholics have been living together, working together, and integrating

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all my lifetime—between 20 and 30 percent of Catholic marriages are with Protestants and others—but are continually frustrated by secret societies and other agencies that, for their own political reasons, must convince the world that Catholic/Protestant antagonism is the basic problem. Intercommunity conflict has been resisted surprisingly well, but it is deliberately created as government policy.

Mr. Fox expresses racist assumptions that are unacceptable. Irish people are neither more aggressive nor more inane than others, but the same propaganda machine that told Europeans that Americans are uncultured, and the world that the Italians are lazy, the French promiscuous, the Germans militarists by nature, portrayed us as prone to fighting, irrational, unmanageable, unable to solve problems because we continually alter the questions. These assumptions are as unacceptable and as out of date as vulgar St. Patrick's Day jokes. Using them indicates intellectual sloth.

A number of factual untruths mar Mr. Fox's article, as well. For instance, there have never been a million Protestants in Ireland as a whole, let alone the northeast. The use of the word "million" boosts the numbers in the population presumed to support British policy and implies that, in a population of one and a half million, Catholics and others must be only 500,000. In fact they are over 600,000, about 42 percent of the total in Northern Ireland.... They are the biggest single religious group in Northern Ireland, in Ireland, and in the European Community.

One of the disputed Orange marches through areas where Catholics are offended by them occurred at Drumcree. Mr. Fox says this "went off relatively without incident except for a lot of nationalist noisemaking." In fact people were assaulted, businesses were brought to a standstill, people were killed, ports were closed. What Mr. Fox means apparently is that it passed off without incidents that were considered important by government apologists. . . .

Perhaps your readers may get some idea of the worth of Mr. Fox's analysis when they learn that a book that he describes as "a definitive book of memorable British history" (*1066 and All That*) was in fact a comic book with racist overtones written as a diversion to amuse students.

If any of your readers wish to receive a fuller critique of Mr. Fox's article, it can be obtained by communicating with Springhill House, fax +44-1232-233342, or e-mail des@springhill.nireland.com

Desmond Wilson
Belfast

Our Man in Nairobi:

MICHAEL CHEGE ["Our Man in Nairobi", Spring 1998] has done a superb job of capturing the methods and message of Smith Hempstone's ambassadorship as related in his book, *Rogue Ambassador: An African Memoir*. The admirable Hempstone raised the salient issues of democracy and governmental good practices with the corrupt and corrupting Daniel arap Moi regime in Kenya.

As an official of the often-maligned Bush administration, Hempstone stands out even more dramatically today when contrasted with the Clinton administration's wholesale engagement policy, which lacks proportionate emphasis on human rights or democratic governance. A version of this "diplomatic speak" came during Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's visit with the "new generation" of African leaders in mid-December 1997. After Albright downplayed human rights and democracy failures in the Congo, its new strongman, Laurent Kabila, openly mocked her in perverse but apt gratitude. Albright's fawning comments (partly corrected since) toward the Congo's latest tyrant should remind us of the limits of dishonesty in the service of the politics of engagement. President Clinton has brought this practice to a new level, or better said, a new low.

Whereas candidate Bill Clinton during the 1992 presidential campaign accused

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President Bush of "coddling the old communist guard in China", President Clinton publicly embraced such old and new African thugs as Moi and Kabila, as well as Senegal's virtual president-for-life, Abdou Diouf, during his African grand tour in late March. Clinton's apologies for old wrongs during the era of slavery or the Cold War may impress liberal American constituents but will hardly influence African tyrants to mend their ways. Making nice to bad leaders in public may be diplomatic for the careerist "stripped pants" set, which Hempstone held in low esteem, but better results can often be had by declaring things evil when they are so, as Ronald Reagan proved. . . .

Thomas H. Henriksen
Hoover Institution

Correction:

PROFESSOR John Gray has brought it to my attention that I rendered his term for Isaiah Berlin's general political outlook—"agonistic liberalism"—as "agnostic liberalism" ["A Hedgehog After All", Spring 1998]. As Gray explains in his persuasive book, the former is taken from the Greek word "agon", and is meant to capture his thesis that "Berlin's is a stoical and tragic liberalism of unavoidable conflict and irreparable loss among inherently rivalrous values." Mea culpa! Professor Gray himself has generously described the review as "fair-minded" and "illuminating", and I trust that not too many readers were misled by my unfortunate word substitution. □

Adam Wolfson
The Public Interest

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Anatomy of a Farce

Adam Garfinkle

America sees farther because America stands taller.... We are the indispensable nation.

—*Madeleine Albright, Feb. 18, 1998*

HOW IS IT that the indispensable nation had to rely twice in the space of four months on the likes of Yevgeny Primakov and Kofi Annan to save itself from serious embarrassment at the hands of the error-prone dictator of a middle-sized country? It took some doing. From October 29 to March 2, the Clinton administration's management of the most recent phase of the Iraq crisis fluctuated between mediocre and abysmal. Virtually no rule of diplomatic prudence and good sense escaped violation, including, one fears, the rule holding that the strategic misjudgments of great powers rarely go unpunished.

This did not have to happen. Being the only superpower does bring certain inescapable burdens, such as having to deal with the free-riding, envy, special pleadings, and financial entreaties of various states. But no law decrees that such burdens must in short order turn a position of substantial strength in a key region of the world into one of foundering weakness. Yet that is precisely what the Clinton administration has managed to do.

The administration, of course, does not see things this way. Nor does it seem to recognize the potential for serious damage that its fumbling has created. Aside from the consequences of letting Baathi Iraq escape the most inclusive non-proliferation regime ever created, the advent of even a rudimentary Iraqi weapons-of-mass-destruction capability will make the U.S. deterrent function in the oil-rich Persian Gulf far more costly and difficult in every way. It may render that function so politically fragile in the region's host countries as to be unsustainable in the long run. Given that the balance of interests and attention often trumps the raw balance of power, it may not be so clear even a year hence just who is deterring whom in the Gulf—with all that implies for the vitality of the present liberal international order.

RECENT U.S. policy toward Iraq may be summed up in one word: disconnected. With six years of supine behavior, the Clinton administration disconnected itself from its own allies and emboldened the Iraqi leadership. Then this past autumn came the serial mishandling of the Iraqi portfolio. As the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) got close—much too close for Baghdad's purposes—to deciphering Iraq's means of concealment, the administration should have expected another Iraqi gambit to upset the process. But it wasn't paying attention. The administration's near simultaneous hesitancy to implement the D'Amato sanctions legislation against the Franco-Russian-Malaysian *Total S.A.* deal with Iran led Saddam to suppose that, if the United States were reluctant to contain Iran, then a deft push from Baghdad might weaken strictures against Iraq too. Then came a maladroit

Adam Garfinkle is the magazine's executive editor.

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American maneuver in the Security Council: when a U.S. proposal to add symbolic sanctions against Iraq because of its uncooperative behavior toward UNSCOM revealed fissures in the Gulf War coalition, Saddam saw an opportunity to deepen those fissures and end the sanctions regime.

Once the crisis erupted on October 29, contemplated U.S. military means grew disconnected from sensible political ends, with pernicious impact both on Iraqi behavior and allied cohesion. If, as virtually everyone understood, the problem was not simply Saddam's weapons but the combination of those weapons and the basic character of his regime, then how could the administration's limited air war option—which was manifestly unable to eliminate the weapons and did not even aspire to eliminate the regime—possibly do more good than harm?

This disconnection first arose in November, and the anxiety it produced contributed to the collapse of the U.S. diplomatic position in a heap of excuses and Russian disingenuity via the Primakov "solution." UNSCOM was sidetracked, Saddam got to watch his old Russian friend humiliate Secretary of State Madeleine Albright by making her fly to Geneva in the middle of the night, President Clinton backed away conspicuously from his "no negotiation" stance, and the whole affair bought time to incubate germs and hide the evidence—in return for which Saddam was thanked merely for repeating promises that he had already broken.

One might have thought that the rapid collapse of the Primakov solution, and increasing evidence of the Iraqi danger that soon followed, would by late January have finally ended the administration's wishful thinking and procrastination. But instead the President redoubled his seminal error of allowing a calculation about acceptable means to drive the definition of policy goals. This forced the administration to engage publicly in the credibility-destroying exercise of repeatedly ratcheting down its goals, ending up with the almost apologetic formula of doing "significant damage" to Iraq's weapons-of-mass-destruction capabilities.

This left the impression that force was contemplated as part punishment for Saddam, part political escape for the Clinton administration, but not as an element in a serious strategy for dealing with Iraq. Were strikes to be accompanied by declaring all of Iraq a no-fly zone? By declaring Republican Guard strongholds no-drive zones? Were strikes shaped to attack the core of Saddam's support to make it easier for other, much abused Sunnis to challenge him? Was releasing frozen Iraqi assets to opposition forces considered, or declaring de facto autonomous parts of Iraqi Kurdistan exempt from sanctions? No doubt such options were discussed in the administration's inner councils, but the point is that *nothing* was done with respect to *any* of them.

The administration's posture fit a familiar pattern of speaking grandly and deploying underwhelming force. The ultimate source of this pattern seems to be temperamental. Administration liberals, living testaments to the triumph of the therapeutic, accept no limit on the healing actions they can take on the world's behalf—hence the diplomatic prozac prescribed in marginal places like Haiti and Bosnia. But their reluctance to use force seriously where U.S. interests are at stake seems similarly without limit. In Iraq, the therapeutic impulse undermined resolution. An administration that feels everyone's pain worried to excess about Iraqi casualties and allowed to stand without comment ludicrous yet ultimately damaging Iraqi claims about the general effects of economic sanctions.

The disconnection between ends and means caused disconnections elsewhere, too. It deepened the fears of America's Arab allies and prompted them to speak in ways contrary to their private convictions. Publicly they decried the use of force because it threatened to further harm innocent Iraqis. In reality, Gulf Arab elites welcomed a use of force aimed at Saddam's jugular. What they really feared was not hurting innocent Iraqis or the

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reaction of their "street", which barely exists, but an attack on Saddam's capillaries, leaving him vengeful and still dangerous.

Other friendly Arab regimes—notably Egypt and Jordan—were genuinely concerned about the public reaction to U.S. bombing, and its effects on regime stability. But their problem was less Saddam than Saddamism: the Iraqi leader as an omnibus symbol of defiance against the varied frustrations of the disenfranchised and dispirited Arabs. The most public reason given for official Arab opposition to U.S. policy—that of a supposed double standard applied to Iraq and Israel—was mostly pretext for the Gulf Arabs; for the others it was more the fear of Saddamism than genuine indignation about double standards.

Nevertheless, the prospect of political upheaval in those Arab countries most friendly toward the United States was real, and it signals a major problem: the very things that we must do to protect these regimes from external threats open them up to internal threats. This is a sobering measure of how weak these regimes really are, and it is the supreme challenge to U.S. policy in the long run. In this respect, the Iraq crisis was not a good omen for the future, for while it is possible to get rid of Saddam if we are prepared to pay the price, it may be impossible to get rid of Saddamism, at least for several generations to come.

AS THE CRISIS dragged into February, several senior administration principals confessed to being in a genuinely tight spot. Critics agreed. But the critics realized something that seems not to have occurred to U.S. national security principals: it was the administration's own behavior that had let Saddam out of his proverbial box and put them into one. U.S. policymakers apparently saw no connection between their own half measures and half-heartedness and Saddam's multi-year string of diplomatic successes, and it led them to misread badly their own depleted leverage over Iraq.

Why, after all, should Saddam back down when the last time he challenged UNSCOM he was rewarded with the Primakov solution? Why, too, should he relent for fear of his own longevity when, Washington having ruled out *a priori* the use of ground forces, the worst prospect he faced would have removed neither his military trump nor his government? Indeed, of all the instances of the administration's disconnectedness the most vivid was its interpretation of Kofi Annan's late February mission to Baghdad. Saddam accepted Annan's terms on February 23 not mainly because he feared American military threats, but because, as with the Primakov solution, he could not bear to forgo the concessions put before him.

Just consider his haul. In a trice Annan and Saddam together turned Iraq's pariah status into a new respectability. Saddam diluted UNSCOM's authority with the befuddling apparatus of the Special Group, complete with a Sri Lankan go-between and diplomatic nannies acting potentially as an early warning system for the Iraqi weapons complex. He punctured the sanctions regime, too, thanks to the administration's agreeing to Security Council Resolution 1153, which allows Iraq to sell more oil than it is now capable of exporting and to import at about half the pre-war level. Seen together these concessions mean that Saddam can anticipate the complete demise of the sanctions regime when, working under its new limitations, UNSCOM fails to substantiate Iraqi misdeeds before its next mandated report to the Security Council in October. And he drove home the message to those Arab regimes that are still prospective Iraqi targets that they are unwise to trust the United States with their security.

The triumphalist claim, therefore, that the threat of American force caused Iraq to "back down" turned failure into farce. UN Ambassador Bill Richardson's assertion—"It was America's force and America's military presence that enabled the agreement and the full access to inspections to happen. I believe that . . . our influence since the agreement has increased in the region."—ranks as perhaps the most breathtakingly false statement ever

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uttered by a Clinton administration official, though admittedly there is much competition for the honor.

The ignominy continued even after February 23. Despite having failed to build an automatic response to Iraqi backsliding into the germane Security Council resolution passed on March 2, the President insisted that the United States would respond swiftly to any Iraqi violations, and that it need not go back to the Security Council before so doing. Annan quickly challenged him, and within days Mr. Clinton backed down again, saying, "Of course we would consult. It would be unthinkable that we wouldn't." Saddam celebrated this last American collapse in his usual manner—by ordering a group of political prisoners shot.

WHAT HAPPENS when the indispensable nation screws up big time? We're bound to find out, and the experience will not be enjoyable.

After all that has happened, persuading Saddam that we are serious about using force against him when he again violates his commitments will be all but impossible. The new politico-legal context that the administration has accepted will not help either. If the United States abjured force when Iraq's violations were blatant and massive, will Saddam believe that America will go to war over the details of an ambiguously worded agreement, one whose judge (Mr. Annan) will be loath to proclaim a failure for fear of offending its creator (also Mr. Annan)? It doesn't seem so. Already in mid-April Iraqi officials began to probe for weakness, and it was not long before they found it in credible reports that U.S. policy was backing away from considering the Iraqi enfeeblement of UNSCOM to be an offense worthy of a military response.

If deterring Saddam will be hard, recruiting broad and reliable allied aid when Iraq next violates its commitments will be impossible. U.S. credibility in the region has tumbled off the edge. Saudi Arabia and Iran, the two biggest local losers from Iraq's having escaped punishment, are moving closer to each other. So, gingerly, are Iran and Iraq. Farther afield, the energy-rich states of the Caspian basin must be recalculating their strategies, having just watched a weak but wily Russia outmaneuver the United States in their backyard. As for the Europeans, only the British may still be of any help; like Saddam, both France and Russia have sensed U.S. weakness and are now ever more firmly dug in against U.S. policy in the Gulf.

This is not, alas, the indispensable administration. U.S. diplomacy has created a no-win proposition whose dangers far transcend the local security environment. It has gone from dual containment to incipient strategic collapse in the Persian Gulf. For Saddam Hussein, it would qualify as an unnatural act not to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by U.S. failures. The future depends on how he goes about it.

Our best hope is that the next time Saddam violates his promises, he will overreach to such an extent as to force the Clinton administration to pound the Baath into final submission. If that should also drive a stake through the heart of "assertive multilateralism", risen unexpectedly from its grave in Mogadishu in the form of Mr. Annan's mission to Baghdad, then so much the better. But if Saddam has gotten smarter and more patient, we are in trouble. The Clinton administration ignored Iraq as best it could for more than six years; given half a chance it will do so again. Then our situation will deteriorate slowly instead of at full tilt as it did last winter—slowly but not innocuously. As sanctions erode, Saddam will be building his bio-bombs, honing his means of delivering them, and, once UNSCOM is no longer his most proximate problem, picking out a neighborhood target for fun and profit, intimidation and terror.

One can hardly wait to hear administration officials propound their theories of diplomacy and force the next time we go round the block with Saddam, as, sooner or later, we surely will. If farce follows tragedy, then what follows farce? □

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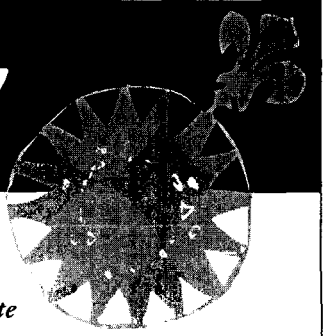

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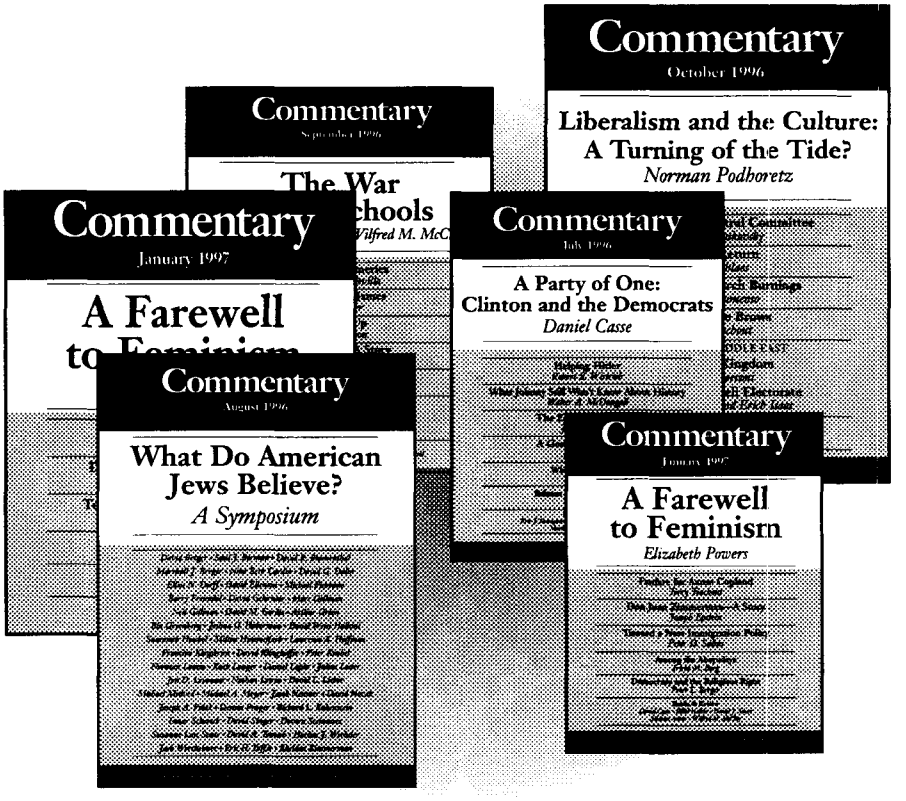

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